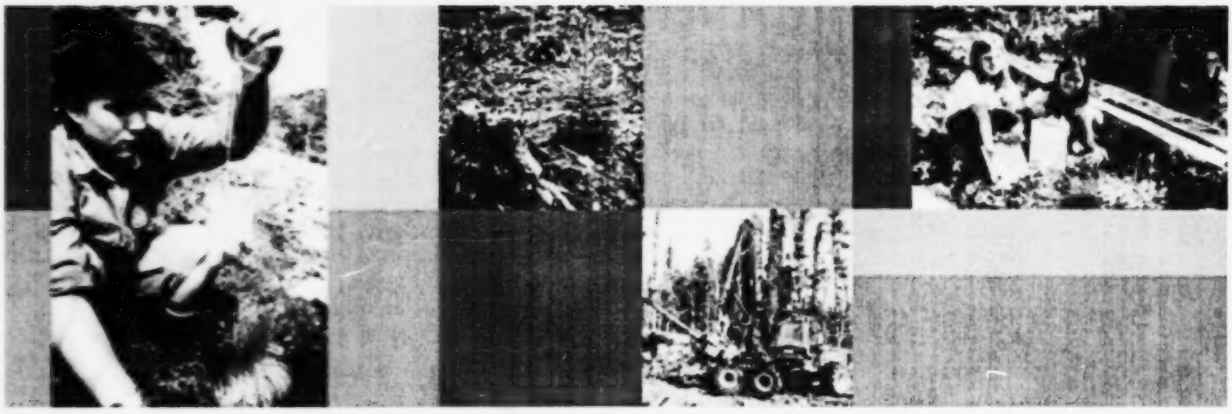
Proceedings of the
National Conference on Aboriginal Forestry

Creating a New Climate for Aboriginal Forestry



First Nations Forestry Program Programme forestier des Premières nations

May 11-13, 2004
Thunder Bay, Ontario

Government of Canada Gouvernement du Canada

Canada

The First Nations Forestry Program (FNFP) is a joint initiative between Natural Resources Canada and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. The FNFP's National Conference is an opportunity for those interested in Aboriginal forestry to participate in three days of information sharing, partnership building and collaborative work. Delegates will engage in spirited dialogue on relevant and current issues and opportunities important to Aboriginal forestry.

The Conference will bring together Aboriginal leaders, government decision-makers, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal forest industry professionals, academics and students for dynamic and informative presentations, workshops and local field trips. There will also be a demonstration of traditional crafts from the forest, and on the use of GIS technology in forest planning and mapping.

The Fort William First Nation is pleased to welcome the delegates of the conference to their traditional territory.

Natural Resources Canada | Ressources naturelles Canada

Indian and Affairs Canada | Affaires indiennes et du Nord Can

Model Forest Network | Réseau de forêts modèles

Canadian Forestry Association | Association forestière canadienne

Forest Products Association of Canada | Association des produits forestiers du Canada

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"The First Nations Forestry Program (FNFP) supports the unique relationship between forests and First Nations by providing a means of creating sustainable communities and economic self-sufficiency."

— First Nations Forestry Program Booklet, 2003

The First Nations Forestry Program was introduced in 1996 to address First Nation forestry development issues and help improve the economic conditions of First Nation communities. Today, this tripartite partnership program continues as an innovative and proactive federal program that differs from other programs based on these unique characteristics:

- A majority of First Nation representatives sit on the management committees of the program at the provincial, territorial and national levels, in partnership with Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC).
- The program adapts to the needs and priorities of First Nations at the local level since no First Nation community is at the same place along the forestry development curve and self-sufficiency.
- It is a very broad program that covers a wide range of admissible activities in line with the different kinds of support needed by communities, ranging from those who have no experience to those who are very experienced in forestry. It is the only Government of Canada program supporting forest management activities on reserve lands.

This year's First Nations Forestry Program's conference was national in scope with representation from across the country by speakers, workshop leaders, and conference delegates. Over 300 attendees participated in the National Conference on Aboriginal Forestry, May 11-13, 2004 in Thunder Bay, Ontario. The Fort William First Nation was pleased to welcome the conference delegates to their traditional territory.

The intent of this conference series is to provide information on a wide range of opportunities in the forest sector both on and off reserve lands. Under the theme Creating a New Climate for Aboriginal Forestry, topics for this year's conference included: cultural research application to forest management, provincial policies, community level forest management plans, legal developments and the duty to consult, parks and protected areas, forest certification, sustainable forest management, new directions in (inter)national policy, model forests — Aboriginal initiatives, making forestry services viable, non-timber forest products, emerging forestry concepts, forest business development, bioenergy, non-traditional business models, using new technology in forest management planning, and Aboriginal–industry partnerships.

This publication provides summaries of the oral presentations that were given throughout the conference. There were no papers provided by the presenters, but this written record is offered in the belief that it provides valuable information and relays the experiences that were shared with the participants. It is hoped that others who were not present may benefit from these notes.

The success of the conference would not be possible without the time, effort, technical and financial support of numerous people and organizations.

We extend sincere thanks to the many speakers who contributed their time and shared their knowledge with conference delegates; Elder Ann Wilson, Rainy River First Nation, shared her wisdom with all participants.

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Thanks also to the organizers whose dedication and experience made this event a success under what seemed like next-to-impossible timelines. They include the many contributions by: Dave Lemkay, CFS, Ottawa, Jack Smyth, CFS, Ottawa, Reg Parsons, CFS, Ottawa, Terri Wilmon, CFS, Ottawa, Julia Von Hahn, CFS, Ottawa, Rick Greet, CFS, Sault Ste. Marie, Sam Senecal, CFS, Sault Ste. Marie, Natalie Atkinson, CFS, Sault Ste. Marie, Peggy Smith, Lakehead University, Lorraine Rekmans, National Aboriginal Forestry Association, Jean Paul Gladu, Aboriginal Strategy Group, and Elizabeth Muckle-Jeffs and the staff of The Professional Edge.

Financial assistance was provided by the First Nations Forestry Program, both regionally and nationally. We would also like to recognize official sponsors of the conference: National Forest Strategy Coalition, Model Forest Network, Canadian Forestry Association, Government of the Northwest Territories, Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Government of Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Government of Alberta Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, Sustainable Forest Management Network, Forest Products Association of Canada, LP Canada Limited, Domtar Inc., Bowater Incorporated, and Weyerhaeuser Canada, Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers (CANDO), Faculty of Forestry, University of British Columbia, Aboriginal Times.

We recognize the participation by a wide variety of businesses and organizations with their display booths, creating one-on-one knowledge transfer and networking opportunities throughout the three-day conference.

Further information about the First Nations Forestry Program can be obtained by contacting:

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Canadian Forest Service
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(613) 947-7380

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www.fnfp.gc.ca

— First Nations Forestry Program
September 2004

PRIME MINISTER · PREMIER MINISTRE

National Conference on Aboriginal Forestry

I would like to offer my warmest greetings to everyone attending the National Conference on Aboriginal Forestry in Thunder Bay, Ontario from May 11 to May 13, 2004.

This event is a perfect occasion to put into action the Government of Canada's renewed focus on Aboriginal issues, with particular emphasis on forest policies and natural resource management. In cooperation with our partners, our Government is committed to improving the economic conditions in Aboriginal communities in order to see them participate fully in our national vitality – with greater self-reliance and a better quality of life.

This year's theme, *Creating a New Climate for Aboriginal Forestry*, is an excellent opportunity to work cooperatively and build on these economic and environmental commitments. Indeed, you can be proud of your noble contribution to increasing the benefits of Canada's forest industry while safeguarding our natural environment for future generations. Let me take this opportunity to commend all those responsible for organizing this wonderful event.

Please accept my warmest regards and best wishes for a most successful and productive conference.

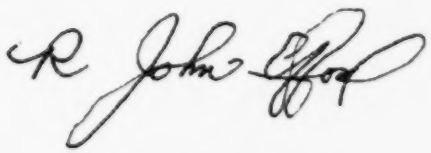
OTTAWA
2004

Messages from the Ministers

I am pleased to welcome you to the National Conference on Aboriginal Forestry 2004, "Creating a New Climate for Aboriginal Forestry." This conference is proof of the success of the First Nations Forestry Program. I congratulate all of our partners on your achievements.

Canada's Aboriginal communities have always had a strong connection with their forests. Today, this relationship leads the way as nations everywhere turn to sustainable forest management. I encourage you to continue to share your traditional knowledge and to seek innovative forestry initiatives that will ensure quality of life, a healthy environment and economic prosperity for your communities.

Natural Resources Canada is honoured to work with you to make this program a continuing model of excellence. Please accept my best wishes for a productive and enjoyable conference.



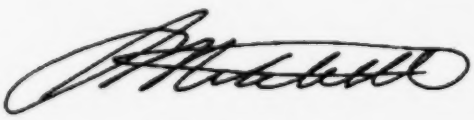
The Hon. R. John Efford, P.C.
Minister of Natural Resources

As Minister jointly responsible for the First Nations Forestry Program, I am honoured to be associated with the first national conference on Aboriginal forestry. The theme, Creating a New Climate for Aboriginal Forestry, is not only evocative of new technologies, forestry methods and economic development opportunities in this sector, but also conveys opportunities for exchange, sharing and forging new partnerships among participants.

Sustainable development and the preservation of forest resources are at the heart of Canada's environmental concerns, and constitute a major sector of economic development. There is no question that the growing participation of Aboriginal communities in this area has greatly contributed to the development of innovative alternatives and new industry standards that respect nature and the values associated with Canada's natural resources.

I have no doubt that this conference will be a great success, in keeping with the spirit of the First Nations Forestry Program, which demonstrates what can be achieved through new partnerships devoted to the progressive role of Aboriginal communities in the management of their natural resources. These economic opportunities, rooted in sustainable development, generate new forestry sectors that help to build healthy and strong communities. That is why I am a strong believer in the importance of networking activities, such as this conference, in creating strong ties among partners.

Congratulations and enjoy the conference.



The Hon. Andrew Mitchell, P.C.
Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development

THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF ONTARIO
LA LIEUTENANTE GOUVERNEURE DE L'ONTARIO

11-13 May 2004

I am pleased to extend greetings to everyone at the official opening of the National Conference on Aboriginal Forestry. A joint initiative between the Departments of Natural Resources and Indian and Northern Affairs, this forward looking project seeks to improve economic conditions in Aboriginal communities through sustainable forest management.

As a member of the Mnjikaning First Nation, I applaud the spirit of cooperation being fostered by this conference. The participation of Aboriginal leaders, forestry professionals, public servants, academics and students will create dynamic discussions and lay the groundwork for meaningful achievements.

I commend the participants, leaders and sponsors of the Conference for their commitment to Aboriginal forestry in Canada and I send my best wishes for a memorable and productive three days in one of Ontario's most beautiful communities.

James K. Bartleman

James K. Bartleman

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Opening Plenary Session

Session Chair: Jack Smyth, Chief, Forestry Development and Aboriginal Affairs, Program Division, Canadian Forest Service, Natural Resources Canada

The moderator opened the conference on National Aboriginal Forestry, welcoming delegates to Thunder Bay and acknowledging the many sponsors. He thanked the Fort William First Nation for welcoming the conference into its territory and then the Mookum Kiishiz Gitchi Gamming drummers performed. They were followed by a prayer by Rainy River First Nation Elder Ann Wilson.

Mike Pelletier, Band Manager, Fort William First Nation extended greetings on behalf of the Fort William Chief of Council. Fort William has a new Bowater sawmill on the reserve, which has created many local employment opportunities. Fort William is now looking into other aspects of the forestry business. He stated that partnerships have been the key to his community's success, and that building on partnerships is what makes it possible to push forward.

Mr. Smyth called upon Lynn Peterson, the Mayor of Thunder Bay, who welcomed everyone to the city. She noted the importance of protecting Aboriginal values in forestry, and said that an innovative arrangement between Bowater and the Fort William First Nation has resulted in Fort William becoming home to a state-of-the-art sawmill, and significant new employment opportunities. Mayor Peterson suggested that this was a model Aboriginal economic development initiative, and a model partnership that will stimulate additional development.

Next, Brian Wilson, Director, Program Division, Canadian Forest Service, from Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) and member of the First Nations Forestry Program (FNFP) National Management Committee, addressed the delegates. He welcomed everyone to Thunder Bay and thanked the organizing committee and the many sponsors of the conference. He said that the Canadian Forest Service was pleased to support the event, and that many First Nation managers were participating at the conference.

Ross Barclay, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), spoke on behalf of Mr. Paul Landry, representative on the National Management Committee. He greeted everyone and thanked the delegates for their participation at the conference. He stated that the conference's theme, "Creating a new Climate for Aboriginal Forestry," was a good one. He suggested that there were also positive changes at INAC, and increasing possibilities for First Nations. Barclay indicated that the department has undergone changes in terms of administration for lands and resources, and that the department is committed to stewardship issues, economic development, and self-reliance.

Harry Bombay, First Nations representative on the National Management Committee, acknowledged Fort William First Nation, the drummers, and Elder Ann Wilson at the outset of his remarks. He emphasized the importance of forest management to First Nation communities across the country. He said, "It is practically an obligation on the part of First Nations' to become stewards of the land," because it is critical to "our future, livelihood, and balanced lifestyle." The preservation of the forest becomes increasingly important as issues such as growth, demand, and climate change emerge. Witnesses included Ron Mathew, North Thompson Band, Vivian Peachey, Forest Stewardship Council, Bonnie Vermette, Ontario Native Women's Association and Murray Ferguson, Weyerhaeuser, Dryden.

At this juncture, Jack Smyth invited the crowd to take part in the witnessing ceremony. Following the ceremony, he introduced Nelson Toulouse, Deputy Chief of the Anishinabek Nation.

Nelson Toulouse extended best wishes from the Grand Council Chief. He addressed the crowd in Ojibwa and English, saying that there are "some things that need to be said." He told delegates that he comes from the Pipe Clan, and said, "As we emerge as Anishinawbe people, we remember our clans and that we speak a language." Mr. Toulouse is the portfolio holder of language in Ontario. He stressed the importance of language and noted that First Nations language retention is at a critical stage. There are currently 53 native languages in use in Canada; by the next generation, it is estimated that only three will survive: Cree, Ojibwa, and Inuit. There is a national strategy in place to preserve and archive language in order to develop programs, or in some cases, revive languages.

Capacity building, skills development, and certification are just a few of the issues faced by First Nations. Mr. Toulouse suggested that there is a need to access a greater share of management options, and that the expertise of First Nations needs to be recognized and accepted.

Aboriginal forestry provides many opportunities for economic development for First Nations' people, which in turn leads to success in management and self-sustainability. First Nations are capable of engaging and investing in forest management, keeping abreast of changes. Mr. Toulouse added, "We do not oppose sharing of wealth, of resources, and conservation."

Everyone working in forestry faces the reality of a market driven economy. Toulouse concluded his talk by stating that First Nations strongly desire to be more involved in the management and export of natural resources, with which they are blessed.

Keynote Address: Creating a New Climate for Aboriginal Forestry

Charles Fox, Ontario Regional Chief, Chiefs of Ontario

Charles Fox greeted the crowd and offered his thanks to the Creator for "all that we have" and for bringing everyone together, commenting that everyone must enjoy life to the fullest. He told the delegates that he had been taught to place the Creator before everything that is done, to acknowledge the spirits that have gone on ahead, to acknowledge the lands of the people that he visits, to visit with respect, and to leave the land in the same way in which it is found. He then thanked Fort William First Nation for letting the conference be held in their territory.

In terms of Aboriginal innovation in forestry, Chief Fox indicated that as an Oji-cree person who had been brought up traditionally, he was taught to respect life, traditions, and natural resources. All life forms have a spirit and the forests are filled with many spirits. "As Aboriginals, we are taught that we are lowest on the chain of life," he stated. This differs from Christianity, in which followers are taught "to lord over nature." Hence, it is very important not to over-harvest, but to maintain the balance of life. Traditional people are making an effort to bring this teaching back. Chief Fox stated that First Nations people have inherent, treaty, and constitutional rights: Aboriginal people have title to the land and resources of this country, and Aboriginal title extends to all of North America. "We believe in it," he said. " I will pass it on to my children, it is what God gave us. These are our inherent, god-given rights. We were placed here by God to live here and sustain our people. These are god-given inherent rights."

There are 11 treaty areas in Canada. When these treaties were entered into with the Government of England, it was understood to be an international agreement that was sacred, and entered into ceremony. Chief Fox stated that as "long as the grass grows" these treaties are to be respected. Non-natives have prospered honouring these treaties, while First Nation people live in squalor. First Nation people believe in treaty rights, but they have not been honoured by them. Aboriginal people should benefit from the treaties, the land, and its resources.

First Nations advocate for the rights set out in Section 35 of the Constitution. Chief Fox said that Aboriginal people should have the same standard of living as everybody else in Canada. Forestry is but one sector that holds the key to areas where work toward common objectives can take place. There is an opportunity to create partnerships to reflect sustainability, and to respect the spirits in the forests.

Chief Fox also acknowledged the racial barrier. Aboriginal people have been told many times that "they can't do it." He asked how can we begin to remove these barriers?

Identifying common goals and objectives is the reason for the conference, stated Chief Fox. He asked the delegates to sit down and consider the opportunities before them, and to look at the process as the goal, in order to create true partnerships. He closed by stating that he was confident the delegates gathered would and could tackle the issues before them.

Elders Panel: A National Perspective on Aboriginal Forestry

Ann Wilson, John Snow, Sr., and Richard David

Ann Wilson

Ann Wilson, Elder from Rainy River First Nation, spoke about the teachings she received as she grew up within her community. She often had a vision that something was ahead of her, she said, but did not recognize what her calling was until she learned to speak her own language.

As a baby, she said, she felt loved when she was tied up in a moss bag. How one is treated as a baby determines how that person will experience the rest of his or her life. When she learned her language, she felt that she was "someone." She knew she was meant to be a teacher and had to believe in the native names she was given.

Ann Wilson is named after the forest and the bear that walks forever, after the feather, after the moon and after the star that helps the moon, she explained. Among her own people, she is often called the "flying Elder" because of the many trips she has made to share her experience and teachings.

Elder Wilson said she teaches about the land and stories of creation because she was taught those stories at an early age. She spoke a word in her own language, and explained that its meaning is much deeper than any English translation. It encompasses kindness, honesty, truth, and integrity — and it summarizes the way she lives, the way she is and the way she tries to do things.

Wilson remembers every word the Elders said to her when she was young. She always listened and learned from them. Their words and ways are part of how she now teaches. Even after many years, she said, she is still teaching little ones from the time they are still within their mothers' wombs. She is glad some children still want to be storytellers like her, and glad that many still want to carry the language.

Richard David

Elder Richard David explained that he is the son of a traditional chief of the Mohawks of Akwesasne, belongs to medicine societies, and is the holder of Eagle Feathers for his community.

He reminded participants that life is a circle — a big cycle that repeats itself.

He shared some of the experiences he has had visiting Mayan people in Mexico and other Aboriginal peoples to find ways to use less of the forest, to use everything one takes out of the earth, and to find ways to take what is needed more sustainably.

His travels and conversations with people from other Aboriginal nations have led him to realize that there are a number of things common to First Nations all over the world. The biggest is the shared belief that the earth is the mother of us all, and that everything is connected. Aboriginal peoples everywhere also share the belief that knowledge is powerful only when shared, and that place is important because the spiritual world is not far away — but, rather, all around us and with us all the time and can be reached any time we speak to the Creator.

Elder David said that when he started to talk to the Mayan people about sustainable development, he discovered that Aboriginal peoples have always practiced it and always will as long as they respect the earth, people, and communities and take their own responsibilities seriously.

Aboriginal people often talk about rights to hunt and trap, he said, but traditional values do not stop there. When a person eats the flesh of an animal, he or she takes the animal's energy and gains the responsibility to enhance the animal's habitats. When one hunts, one never keeps the first fish or deer caught, David said, because it is important to ensure it is not the last one. He encouraged participants to keep this spirit of conservation and responsibility in their hearts and minds at all times.

Aboriginal peoples believe they belong to the land as long as water flows, grass grows, the sun shines and birds fly, he said. Yet one of the first things that happens when development comes to First Nations' lands is that rivers are dammed, the earth is dug up, and the air is polluted.

First Nations peoples are starting to be respected and starting to be treated as viable partners with governments, Elder David said. They will have to work to continue to be good partners and to represent their peoples and traditions.

He concluded with the hope that everyone who heard him speak would take with them at least one part of his message — and that it might help to do things for their neighbours and their communities to keep Mother Earth alive and well.

John Snow, Sr.

John Snow Sr., an Elder from the Stoney Tribal Council said he had given much thought to the stories he should tell in order to help protect Aboriginal Peoples' lands, waters, and resources. The forest and woodlands are only part of the environment of the vast Turtle Island — just part of a vast landscape that includes prairies, lakes, mountains, and oceans.

There is so much to consider when talking of forest management. When one talks of trees in the forest, so many other things must be included: rocks; herbal medicines; red earth paint; yellow earth paint; grey, red, and black earth; animals of the forests; and insects, birds and fish. In addition, there are the four winds that come through to bring breath and life to the land, the rain, and snow that beautify the forest.

Traditional wisdom teaches that we are all part of the family of creation, Elder Snow said.

Snow told delegates how his mother had once wished that he would some day stand among the rainbow people. Now, he understands that the rainbow people are special people: medicine people, spirited people, drummers with their secret songs, the pipe carriers, ceremonial leaders, healers, sun dance makers. Today, he said, the rainbow people must help others with their legends, stories, and teachings.

The Creator made the buffalo that used to roam the prairies and the prairie dogs (gophers) who burrowed beneath it. He explained that all things were created with a purpose — even the gophers that farmers and the government have tried to exterminate. The gophers kept the prairie green and the flowers blooming by making tunnels that allow air and water to circulate. In places where they have been extinguished, studies show the prairie does not thrive as well.

The gophers and forests are our neighbours, said Elder Snow. We must learn to be good neighbours and be careful because we do not understand enough about ecosystems, nature, and the environment.

Snow wove a story of a school started by the animals of the forest. Its message was that there are various ways of learning, and they are all valuable.

There is a real need for economic development in First Nations communities, where the unemployment rate can sometimes be as high as 75 to 80 per cent, he said. However, there is also a need for wise planning in the harvesting of timber and the utilization of natural resources, so that Aboriginal people and their neighbours will see the maximum benefit.

Aboriginal people are only beginning on a long journey to recover their pride and independence, Elder Snow said. Their way of life was one that was in balance with nature and in harmony with creation, but western colonization overwhelmed indigenous peoples. "Colonization came down upon us like a rock crushing a wildflower, but I admire flowers that erupt in concrete and grow among the rocks on the mountainside," he said. Aboriginal people are still growing and flourishing, even after 500 years of colonization.

Cultural Research and its Application to Forest Management

Session Chair: Tom Murray, FNFP, Canadian Forest Service, Natural Resources Canada

First Nations and Forest Management in British Columbia: Is Consultation Enough

Pamela Perreault, University of British Columbia

Pamela Perreault, a PhD student from the University of British Columbia and Ojibwa from Garden River, began the session with a photo of her Dad's treed backyard. She remarked that her original presentation fell to the wayside when she spent some time with her father at their family camp at Echo Lake. For the first time she became aware of the sound of skitters in her area and it instilled within her a fear that she had not felt in a long time. She questioned, "Does consultation as it is currently carried out adequately address First Nations issues in forestry?" Does the government talk to First Nations enough? This question is asked all over the world, she noted. When asked to give her input at a meeting held in Australia, she had much criticism of the existing process, which is fine for reducing red tape and creating partnerships with First Nations. However, the process for First Nations is not adequate. She noted that First Nations concerns were not incorporated into the policy in proportion to the time devoted to the process by First Nations.

Ms. Perreault provided an example of this using research from her MSc thesis on the protection of Culturally Modified Trees (CMTs). In 1991, a process for identifying and preserving CMTs was started. CMTs can be identified by scars, the presence of other CMTs, artefacts, a water source, and relatively flat land. In the past, loggers referred to them as "CATs." Ms. Perreault recounted a poignant memory, which became the reason she chose CMT management for the topic of her research. She recalled how a good friend was asked to give her opinion on why CMTs were valuable to First Nations. Two months later, her Elder friend returned to the site of the CMTs only to find that they had all been cut down. The Elder then asked if Ms. Perreault could do anything, which prompted her to research this question further.

Ms. Perreault outlined the importance of CMTs for the assertion of Aboriginal rights, title, and heritage. Furthermore, she noted quite a lot of legislative protection existed that could be used to preserve CMTs. There is a four-step process for managing CMTs, which includes determining the potential for CMTs, conducting assessments, determining the significance of CMTS, and instituting management prescriptions. To illustrate the obvious shortfalls of this process, Ms. Perreault showed an area of study where she found 278 CMTs. Thirteen meetings with various experts led to a management prescription whereby the CMTs were flagged and excluded from the logging operation. In the next slide, she showed how many of these trees blew down only a short while after they had been spared from the harvest. She then went back to the committee and asked if this was a satisfactory result given that the prescribed process had been followed. She asked if this process met the definition of a meaningful consultation process. She contrasted the value of assigning significance to the CMTs before harvesting with the value after harvesting. Ms. Perreault observed that another problem with this process was that the onus was on First Nations to prove their Aboriginal right before the consultation process.

In concluding her presentation, Ms. Perreault challenged delegates to look at their relationships with the forest rather than focusing on the legal language. Reflecting on whether she would do the same thing in her father's backyard that she would do as a forester, she concluded that she would not. On an optimistic note she added that First Nations are in a good position to be proactive; "Aboriginal people have the right to determine their own protocol on how they want to be consulted."

Creating Space for Aboriginal Peoples in Sustainable Forest Management

Marc Stevenson, Sustainable Forest Management Network

Marc Stevenson introduced his presentation on the "Indicators of sustainable forest management in First Nations and Aboriginal Communities," observing that First Nations are frequently forced to succumb to other languages that cause them to deny their cultural values within forest management principles. Mr. Stevenson talked about how sustainable forest management means different things to different people, from the economic interests of the industry and government, to a stronger focus on continued enjoyment of the forests by Aboriginal groups and environmental organizations.

Government policy sets Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) rules, logic of engagement, and regulations with a stronger focus on the economic concerns as opposed to Aboriginal values and treaty rights. This process undermines traditional Aboriginal values by acting as a systemic cultural barrier to Aboriginal people.

Mr. Stevenson noted that a number of initiatives are designed to create space for Aboriginal people within SFM, which features a more equitable share of Aboriginal participation and decision-making in the process. To conclude, Mr. Stevenson said that Aboriginal rights must be accommodated and Aboriginal people must have a more meaningful involvement with the development of knowledge, values, and management systems in SFM. The support of First Nations must be sought prior to forest management operations.

Addressing the Critical Housing Shortage in Northern Manitoba: Applying Aboriginal Values and Principles to Forest Planning, Management and Harvesting

Michael Anderson, Manitoba Keewatinook Ininew Okimowin Natural Resources Secretariat

Michael Anderson began his discussion of "Addressing the Critical Housing Shortage in North Manitoba and Applying Aboriginal Values" by noting that 53,000 First Nations people use and occupy the vast timber rich areas in Northern Manitoba. Until recently, they constructed homes with locally harvested materials in combination with other materials. He suggested that the critical housing shortage could be addressed by using local wood to build houses, something that treaty rights and forest management agreements could easily accommodate. In addition, it would help to address the problems and expense of transporting building materials. Mr. Anderson observed that there were very few barriers to this initiative at present because much of the forest remained unallocated. Until now, the trees have not been harvested because of restrictive building codes. Fortunately, a new CMHC policy has been developed to accept rough lumber if certain requirements are met.

Mr. Anderson listed the various "Local Lumber" program initiatives which include documenting community interests, principles and values; looking at appropriate housing designs; examining lumber and timber requirements; and developing forest management plans. The program addresses a number of community needs such as the housing shortage and the need for training and employment.

Mr. Anderson described how the program integrates First Nations values by promoting the sacred relationship between the people and their natural environment.

The forestry planning process begins by documenting traditional use, occupancy, and habitation of the forest. He noted that this research is merely held in trust for the community of origin. The next phase of the project is to compare these Aboriginal values with the interests of the logging industry. Finally, he described the various ways that traditional Aboriginal knowledge is incorporated in the project to protect wildlife, track environmental changes, protect cultural/economic values, guide forest management planning, and to share important information.

Questions and Comments

An audience member commented to Pamela Perreault that First Nations were at a disadvantage to other groups in the forestry sector because they lack the dollars to hire professionals. A basic change in policy is needed to protect the CMTs. Ms. Perreault responded that she had made recommendations for increased funding to bring in Elders and other professionals.

Provincial Policies

Session Chair: Terry Wilson, FNFP, Ontario Management Committee

First Nation Forestry Sector (New Brunswick) Beginning, Now and Tomorrow

Ron Loughrey, New Brunswick Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat

Ron Loughrey noted that he would begin with an overview of forestry policy in New Brunswick, touch upon some of the changes that have taken place, and finish up with a look toward future policy in New Brunswick.

Beginning with a brief geographical overview, Mr. Loughrey said that there are 15 First Nations in New Brunswick, with 11,230 people. Seven thousand seven hundred (7700) live on reserve, while the remaining First Nations people in the province live off reserve. The Turnbull Decision/Court of Appeals ruling (1998–1999) stated that Aboriginal peoples have the right to a livelihood from Crown land. This decision triggered discussion and led to new policy in the province. In 1998, agreements were signed by Chief and Council of First Nations communities. These uncomplicated two-page agreements provided for a 5% allocation of wood to be divided up among communities on a per capita basis, with the royalty revenue to go to the First Nation community. Fifteen agreements were signed.

In 1999–2000, Cabinet approved new principles for an updated agreement. Training to build capacity among First Nations continued to be funded as part of the agreement. In the most recent agreement (2002–2007), all 15 First Nations communities signed, and allocations are now distributed more efficiently among the communities. Over 400 people are working because of these agreements. There are still challenges in terms of an ongoing reliance on non-Aboriginal contractors, and differences in professionalism in some cases.

These agreements will continue to be built upon, providing an opportunity to create more jobs for Aboriginal peoples in the forestry sector in New Brunswick.

Creating Economic Opportunities for Aboriginal Communities in British Columbia

Tom Lee, Aboriginal Affairs Branch, Government of British Colombia

Tom Lee acknowledged the Fort William First Nation and provided some geography and background information pertaining to unresolved land claims and treaty negotiations going in British Columbia. There are 200 First Nation bands in the province. British Colombia is currently implementing new legislation and policy to create new economic development opportunities in the forestry sector. The Forestry Act was built on a complex model that has not been accessible to many First Nations. Until recently, there has been an ad hoc approach to First Nation communities' economic interests. The provincial government has recognized that it needs to change its approach.

Bill 41 represents this new policy direction, and in the spring of 2002, the Forestry Act was amended. As a result, a direct reward was made to 36 First Nations. In addition, the Forest Revitalization Plan has opened the sector to new opportunities and new entrants, which is of particular relevance to First Nations. Mr. Lee suggested that this new policy approach has also helped to eliminate regulatory red tape.

The province introduced legislation in order to reallocate timber to First Nation communities. Bill 28, the Forest Revitalization Act, was passed in March 2003, following a Throne Speech that same year that acknowledged the need to create more economic opportunities for First Nation communities. Bill 28 makes it possible for the province to take back land from major licensees in order to facilitate opportunities for First Nations.

There is now a First Nation Forest Strategy in B.C. to respond to this new legal agreement, and to increase participation in forestry. The province's First Nation Forest Strategy allows for timber tenure to be directly awarded to First Nations and includes a revenue sharing forecast to start with $15 million in 2003/04, up to a fixed amount of $50 million as of 2006/07.

There are challenges ahead to find timber and the complexity of the reallocation process. There have been 22 new agreements with 30 First Nations since September 2003. In the short term, both sides are trying to figure out how these interim solutions are working. In the long term, Mr. Lee concluded, the province and the First Nations will work out land claim issues, at which point new agreements will be made.

Forest Policy in Ontario

Riet Verheggen, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

Ms. Verheggen began her presentation with a brief overview of Ontario's geography. She told the group that the focus of her talk would be on the Ontario Forest Management policy structure, and that she would tie in First Nations issues to this process. Since the 1990s, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) has adopted the concept of sustainability, and developed strategies to support sustainability, partnerships in an effort to contribute to the economic well-being of Ontario through the development of natural resources. In 1995, the Crown Forest Sustainability Act (CFSA) became law, which stated that Crown forests are to be conserved ecologically and biologically. This Act has helped to meet the needs and issues of communities in and around the forest.

Ontario's Forest Policy Committee endorsed a new Forest Class Environmental Assessment. Members of this committee are chosen from stakeholders, and there is one Aboriginal member. The committee functions as an Advisory Committee to the ministry and the Deputy Minister is the chair of the committee. The Forest Environmental Act, Condition 34, obligated the Crown to conduct negotiations. These negotiations include (where opportunities exist) job opportunities, wood to mills in Aboriginal communities, third-party licences for unallocated wood close to reserves, and program development for capacity building.

Forest management planning is a result of direction outlined in the province's Forest Management Plan, which is prepared in consultation with Sustainable Forest Licence (SFL) holders. Currently, there are no Aboriginal SFLs in Ontario. Forest Management Plans are a legal requirement, approved by the Ontario government for a five-year term. These plans determine, among other things, the allowable harvest levels and describe harvest, renewal, access, and values, while identifying how these values will be protected.

To conclude, Ms. Verheggen suggested that working with local Ministry of Natural Resources District Managers was a good way to access opportunity in Ontario's forestry sector. Creating clear and viable business plans and partnerships, and finding the best way to develop skills are also means, according to the OMNR, to access opportunity.

Forest Management Plans at the Community Level

Session Chair: Stanley Sanguez, FNFP, Northwest Territories Management Committee

Brian Donovan, Forest Financial Consulting

Brian Donovan explained that First Nations' land bases in Atlantic Canada are quite small compared to those in other parts of the country. The average land base in New Brunswick is only 450 hectares, so it is necessary to approach planning a little differently than in other places.

Forest management planning makes it possible to "get out in front of what's happening, think about

what you want to do and what benefits you want to see," Mr. Donovan said. It allows individuals to define what they want for their community; determine cultural, employment, and economic benefits; and helps them to do the right things at the right time to achieve all of those aims.

Planning can be distilled down to four basic components, according to Mr. Donovan: vision, goals and objectives, resources, and land base.

Vision is important, especially for First Nations communities, since they tend to look further into the future, while holding a clearer understanding of the land and its past, he said. It is important to ask who establishes the vision in particular communities. In some, it may be the whole community, while others may depend on their council and chiefs.

There are both "hard" and "soft" goals and objectives. Hard objectives may include jobs, economic opportunities, the creation of other industries, and the ability to supply local mills. Soft goals include community support, improved quality of life, maintenance of culture, and protection of traditional hunting and fishing.

Once a community has thought through these basic issues, he said, it must determine if it possesses trained people, equipment, the necessary money, computers, trucks, power saws, et cetera. If any of these elements are lacking, communities must decide how to get them. Then, the land base itself must be explored to determine if boundaries are clearly defined, how diverse the forest is, how much harvesting has already occurred and the stages of development of the land.

From a management perspective, once the four basics have been examined, three levels of land use should be explored:

- Harvesting, which may include clear-cutting, selective cutting, or trimming
- Silviculture, whose goals range from pre-commercial trimming to plantation creation
- Non-timber considerations, such as wildlife or water stewardship, hunting and fishing, and harvesting of berries and other non-timber products.

Rhonda Oblin, Waswanipi Cree Model Forest

The most important issue in community forest management is how First Nations people can have real impact on the process and ensure their goals and values are integrated into what is happening on the ground, said Rhonda Oblin.

In the past, plans were made and brought to the community for consultation. By the time Aboriginal peoples are heard, it is too late to change anything but the fine-tuning. Real change requires that consultation be integrated into the process from the beginning.

Consultation can result in amazing theories, responses, pilots, and research projects, but if it does not involve talking to the people on the land, change will not happen or be meaningful, Ms. Oblin said. The first step is developing relationships with people, governments, and companies. This will require getting over past differences. The Cree have taken both levels of government and forestry companies to court in the past, but it is important to move beyond those obstacles to plan for the future.

Ms. Oblin stressed the importance of hammering out the difficult issues involved in establishing a meaningful consultation process before any planning or project begins. It can be difficult and time consuming to resolve issues about who should be at the table and what consultation should "look like," but it is the only way to ensure real community input, inclusion, and support.

Real change happens with changes in policy and the law. It is important to find out how to "play the game." This means finding out how the process works in a given province. The courts are always an available recourse, but the process is expensive and time-consuming and cutting continues to take place while cases are heard.

Ms. Oblin reminded participants that there is a difference between those who live off the land and those who represent them. Too often, in Waswanipi, trappers and hunters were forgotten and those living on the land suffered.

The Waswanipi Model Forest was started in 1997 and is Canada's only Aboriginal-led model forest program. It took five years to establish relationships of trust with people who had previously been in conflict with the Cree. "It sounds great to say, come sit and talk with us, help us make decisions about the land we all share but, in practice, it's a big challenge to get people to talk and work together," she said.

The Model Forest has brought Waswanipi to a greater understanding of its land and resources and has helped make changes that are useful to its people. In the end it all comes down to consultation, reiterated Ms. Oblin. "That's the foundation, the beginning, the only useful place to start."

Alec Chingee, McLeod Lake First Nation

Alec Chingee explained that McLeod Lake Indian Band had only been granted its lands in the past two years. The Band, which is located in central British Columbia, has about 400 members, 300 of whom live off reserve. The Band owns a logging company (Duz Cho Logging) that benefits all its members through improved education, social programs, and renovated housing.

Mr. Chingee outlined the history of the McLeod Lake First Nation. After the decline of the fur trade, industrial forestry operations moved into the Band's traditional lands in the 1960s. The logging companies got rich but the people of McLeod Lake got nothing. Inquiries about joining Treaty 8 began in 1973, followed by political actions, illegal logging, blockades, and court cases in the 1980s. In the 1990s, Duz Cho was established and grew into a successful company, harvesting for the Band and other licensees. In 1997/98, a Treaty 8 settlement gave the band 20,000 hectares of new reserve lands.

The people of McLeod Lake First Nation chose timber to sustain themselves because they recognized that trapping would never be a way of life again, he said.

By 2003, the Band had met all the requirements of the First Nations Land Management Act and control of forest management was transferred directly to the Band. At present, Mr. Chingee said, Duz Cho is the largest harvesting and road building company in the McLeod Lake area and is, probably, the largest First Nations logging company in the country.

The challenges of self-management include the development of comprehensive forest management plans, block and road layout, GPS and GIS mapping, site preparation, tree planting, plantation tending, and forest health maintenance, Mr. Chingee said. However, the new challenges have brought with them new opportunities for employment and economic benefits. "If we want our people to be self-sufficient, we need to develop skills and learn how to take care of our needs as they arise."

The success of Duz Cho gives the McLeod Lake Indian Band the potential to expand into other ventures, such as oil and gas, construction, technology development, and tourism. The Band looks to other First Nations to help them achieve their goals and hopes that others will learn from their experiences and follow in their footsteps, Mr. Chingee said. He concluded by sharing the Band's motto: "Make sure the footprints we leave behind are the ones our children will be proud to walk in."

Who Are We?

Session Chair: Lorraine Rekmans, National Aboriginal Forestry Association

Forest Products Association of Canada and Aboriginal Relations

Andrew de Vries, Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC)

The Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC) is the national and international voice for Canada's wood, pulp and paper producers. It provides a forum for advancing ideas and issues of key importance to the Canadian forest products industry and the 1,200 communities it helps sustain across Canada. FPAC builds on nearly one hundred years of experience the former Canadian Pulp and Paper Association (CPPA). Traditionally, neither the CPPA nor FPAC have been active in aboriginal affairs. In the past year FPAC has received a temporary mandate from its board to become active on aboriginal affairs as it relates to the education, training, employment and economic opportunities for aboriginal people. FPAC has started several preliminary projects in these areas and hopes to receive a permanent mandate for aboriginal affairs as this topic is of importance to the forest products industry.

The industry has changed considerably since the early 1900s. The FPAC's vision, developed and adopted by its CEOs, is to be "a leader in advancing the global competitiveness and sustainable stewardship of the Canadian forest products." It focuses on national and international public policy issues. This new approach is mobilizing industry's collective leadership, speaking with one voice for the industry at the national level. The organization is supporting the development of a vision to guide the renewal of the industry, advance industry's image domestically and internationally, and increase influence among national opinion leaders and key influencers.

The focus area for market access and acceptance is in promoting leadership and sustainability within the sector with a focus on forestry and environmental practices. FPAC also promotes the sustainability performance of Canadian forest products in the marketplace.

Within Aboriginal Affairs, FPAC is looking to increase training, education, employment and opportunities. In many areas, a potential employee needs to have completed Grade 12 in order to get a mill job. FPAC has been very successful in creating short-term seasonal forestry jobs. The next step needed is to increase the number of Aboriginal professional foresters. FPAC would like to improve its communication with members, with the federal government, and with Aboriginal organizations and communities. It currently publishes monthly bulletins on the latest Aboriginal Forestry news and works informally with NAFA. It has also hosted conference calls on issues of interest and held meetings with INAC and FNFP staff. Mr. de Vries explained that FPAC does not get involved in politics and legal interventions.

BEAHR: Opportunities in the Environment Sector

Tanya Tucker, Building Environmental Aboriginal Human Resources (BEAHR)

The BEAHR National Steering Committee (NSC) was established in December 2001 to influence the long-term employability of Aboriginal people (including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) in the environment sector. The Canadian Council for Human Resources in the Environment Industry (CCHREI) and the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada (AHRDCC) are two partners of BEAHR.

The goal of BEAHR over the next 15 years is to increase Aboriginal environment employment by 6000 positions in environmental protection, conservation, and preservation of natural resources and environmental sustainability. BEAHR will reach these goals by developing programs based on career awareness, the provision of training and employment resources, and recognition of environmental excellence. Aboriginal EnviroCareers are outlined in both students' and facilitators' guides. Volunteer speakers explain how they got where they are, bringing both practitioners and youth together in the classroom and putting a face on high concept jobs.

Other ways for high school students to be introduced to environmental careers is through the Aboriginal EnviroCareers calendar contest, in which high school students create artwork of the environmental careers in their community.

Employers receive wage subsidies of up to $8,000 when they hire an Aboriginal post-secondary student. BEAHR's Employer Guide is a tool designed to assist environmental employers develop positive Aboriginal recruitment and retention practices. Other available resources are cultural awareness workshops, and BEAHR Tracks, a quarterly electronic newsletter.

The environmental sector is natural for Aboriginal students to get involved in, said Ms. Tucker.

Creating a Climate for Partnership: Building a Sustainable Relationship With CESO to Enhance the First Nation Forestry Programs in Canada

Allison Deer, National Director, Programs and Services, Canadian Executive Services Organization (CESO)

Ms. Deer provided examples of the type of services CESO has to offer such as, business support services, general development, community planning, resource management, and governance/leadership workshops.

Ms. Deer's presentation focused on the potential for developing partnership with CESO and she highlighted several national programs developed and delivered by CESO, which have resulted from various sponsorships with corporate, and government agencies. For example, CESO designed and delivers a National MBA Experience, which is, sponsored by the Royal Bank of Canada in partnership with a variety of University MBA programs. Teams of University MBA students work with Aboriginal businesses and communities on specific projects. CESO also has a partnership with the Business Development Bank of Canada, to provide advisory and business support services to aboriginal entrepreneurs who receive financial assistance from the BDC. She provided specific examples of a tri-partnership between CESO, the Forestry Industry and Aboriginal communities in Quebec and in Ontario in the area of project and business development.

Quite a number of success stories have resulted from collaborations between industry, volunteers, and CESO Aboriginal Services, said Ms. Deer. A recent CESO assignment with a major forestry company in Quebec, resulted in the approval of substantial funding for, a well known native entrepreneur from the Timiskaming First Nation, for a feasibility study and for the purchase of special cutting equipment for sensitive areas. As well as, obtaining training dollars to train community members, in the use of heavy equipment.

CESO has seven regional offices across Canada located in BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and Atlantic. The Manitoba office covers clientele living in northwestern Ontario.

Who is NAFA?

Lorraine Rekmans, Executive Director, National Aboriginal Forestry Association (NAFA)

NAFA is a First Nation controlled organization with more than 400 members who are First Nations, members of First Nations, First Nations organizations, non-Aboriginal organizations or individuals interested in furthering the objectives of sustainable forest management. It is a non-profit, non-governmental corporation. Its mandate, which is non-political, is to promote and support Aboriginal people who are involved in forest management with advocacy and research tools. NAFA has often partnered with the First Nation Forestry Program on various projects.

Aboriginal participation in forest management is not to be viewed as "just another stakeholder," said Ms. Rekmans. In assisting Aboriginal communities NAFA has prepared a video geared to Aboriginal students, developed tools for forest certification, and assisted in dealing with forest issues.

Moving forward at local levels, NAFA finds there are restrictions due to funding allocation and resources. It takes time and money for a successful forestry development program. In many cases, access to timber rights is granted to corporations, not to First Nations.

Traditional Craft Demonstration

The Cultural Use and Ecology of Black Ash

Richard David, Elder, Mohawks of Akwesasne

Richard David, a Mohawk Elder and basket maker from the Akwesasne First Nation began his session with a PowerPoint presentation on the process of creating ash baskets out of "non-timber forest products." He explained that he did not like the title because ash trees were used.

As he showed slides about the process of pounding a black ash tree to separate the annular rings for strings, he talked about the events leading up to the creation of the black ash tree-planting project. According to Mr. David, the Mohawks of Akwesasne were first to develop a department devoted exclusively to the environment, aptly named "The Department of the Environment." He said the project began when he worked for this Department distributing tree seedlings for reforestation throughout the community. An Elder inquired if there were any ash trees for her to plant. After searching for a source of black ash seedlings, he had to admit that there were none, and the black ash project was born. He noted that although black ash is considered a garbage wood by foresters and farmers, it is still valued in his First Nation. So they planted their own seedlings and started to distribute them in their communities.

Mr. David then showed slides of his various basket making courses and his proud students. Forms are employed to make baskets of consistent sizes, using both natural and fabric dyes for the splints used in the basket making. He showed participants a slide of all the various forms of baskets he makes, including wedding baskets, hunting baskets, and pack baskets.

After the slide presentation, Mr. David demonstrated how to split the black ash into very thin strips for the baskets. First he took the annular strips of ash he had soaked the night before and talked about the different thickness of the wood strips, which vary from year to year. The thick ones are good for the main upright pieces of the basket. At one end of the strip he made a cut across the width about half way into the wood. He then took a homemade knee clamp, which he humorously dubbed the "original thigh master," and clamped the wood strip at one end within the wood clamp, which he pushed together with his knees. At this point Mr. David bent the strip over one side of the clamp to start the split. He continued spitting the strip by evenly pulling on each half of it as he controlled the resistance with his knees.

He then showed how to attach the handles, which Mr. David explained are typically made of white ash. He concluded the demonstration by showing how to finish the basket by lacing the rim of it with very narrow strips of black ash.

Mr. David concluded his session with a few general comments about basket making. He remarked that it takes approximately two hours to pound enough of the splint to make one big hunting basket. He said he also loves to teach the basket making and admitted it is a labour of love for him because the work involved does not match the money he gets for each basket.

How First Nations' People, Traditions and Handiworks Survive

Elsie and Romeo Bisaillion, Anishinaabe Elders

Elsie Bisaillion began her presentation with a teaching about how First Nations' people, traditions and handiworks survive. To demonstrate, she showed a tiny moccasin that is 77 years old and in excellent condition. She continued with a display of various traditional and modern First Nations' arts and crafts. The items included leather dresses, vests, jackets, moccasins, bags, and belts. Elsie talked about her attachment to each piece she has made and how she likes to send her good energy along with the item if she feels it is going to a good place. She and her partner Romeo Bisaillion also make sure that all the materials are used for something, so there is no waste. The thread they use for their hand-sewn leatherwork is durable carpet thread.

Elsie Bisaillion shared some teachings she had received while attending some of her craft displays. An Elder once told her that he was glad that she did not put podems on her drums and moccasins. This was because he did not like to see them walked on or pounded. An artist comes up against many different opinions about his or her work. The Creator has given people many gifts, including the gift to be creative.

Ms. Bisaillion then talked about the process of making a porcupine headdress. She concluded the session with an interesting story about the power of medicine and prayer. When her grandson was nine years old, he asked Elsie to go pick some princess pine. As they were leaving, she gave him the sema (tobacco) to carry and told him to offer it with a prayer when he picked the princess pine. Everything went as planned and they returned home with some princess pine and made princess pine medicine to drink. Her grandson Joey had many plantar's warts that were scheduled to be removed the following week. The next morning Joey's mother called to ask what she had done to Joey because all of his plantar's warts were gone! Ms. Bisaillion described how she figured it had been a combination of the tobacco offering, walking on the earth, the prayer, and the medicine.

Ms. Bisaillion talked about various experiences she had as an Anishinaabe person. One Elder talked to her about how First Nations should always be proud of who they are. He taught her about the importance of passing on the culture and identity to the younger generation of First Nations people.

She also talked about her internal conflicts about cultural appropriation and her refusal to make traditional wedding outfits for a non-native couple. "We have enough logos out there!" she said, before concluding optimistically that First Nations are strong and are growing in numbers. Times are changing (for the better).

Legal Developments and the Duty to Consult

Session Chair: Ron Mayer, FNFP, British Columbia Management Committee

Consultation – An Overview

Donald R. Colborne, Barrister

Donald Colborne explained that issues between the Crown and First Nations in Canada were, historically, dealt with by treaty and negotiation. That changed during most of the 20th century, when Crown policy was to supersede treaties that had been made, refuse to enter into any new treaties, and broadly deny that Aboriginal land claims and the right to self-government existed. Generally, the courts acquiesced in this view and accepted that the concept of Canadian parliamentary supremacy vested all authority in federal and provincial legislatures.

As a result, Mr. Colborne said, poor relations between First Nations and the Crown prevailed, while grievances, problems, and important questions were left unaddressed and unresolved. Toward the end of the 20th century, however, the position of the courts began to shift. With the cases of Nass Valley in British Columbia and the Cree in Northern Quebec, the courts began to acknowledge that people who had lived on the land from time immemorial had de facto rights to the land.

In 1982, as a result of political pressure from Aboriginal people and recent court decisions, acknowledgement of Aboriginal treaty rights was included in the repatriated Constitution, he said. The 1982 Constitution Act provisions said that existing Aboriginal and treaty rights were "recognized and affirmed." Despite the Constitutional clause, governments continued to maintain that the meaning of treaties had to be negotiated and refused to concede any meaningful ground on land and treaty Rights.

This prompted the Courts to weigh in with several landmark decisions, said Mr. Colborne. The Sparrow case dealt with a member of a B.C. First Nation who was fishing with a net that exceeded the terms of his licence. He argued that he had an Aboriginal right to fish. The case led to a complicated test, established by the Supreme Court of Canada, that permitted the Crown to infringe on treaty rights in a limited way, but only if it could justify doing so. The test included consideration of whether the Aboriginal people in

question had been consulted. This duty to consult was based on the fiduciary duty of the Crown to act honourably toward Aboriginal people.

For there to be a fiduciary duty, he said, there must be a vulnerability. As a result, the duty to consult is strongest where the First Nation's position is the weakest. The Supreme Court elaborated on the duty to consult in the Delgamuukw case:

There is always a duty of consultation, but the nature and scope of the duty of consultation will vary with the circumstances.

These decisions led several lower courts to render decisions about when consultation is required and the form it must take, Mr. Colborne said. At the same time, several governments began to develop consultation policies — the clearest of which is a 38-page policy from the province of British Columbia.

The first clear decision rendered by an Appeals Court regarding the duty for consultation was rendered in the Halfway River case in British Columbia. In that case, he explained, the court upheld that treaty hunting rights were in conflict with a timber-harvesting licence. Since these two rights were on an equal claim (Constitutionally established treaty rights versus Constitutionally established provincial rights to manage natural resources), the Crown had "to undertake reasonable consultations with a First Nation which may be affected by its decision."

The Haida case, also in British Columbia, resulted in a B.C. Supreme Court decision that private parties (in this case, Weyerhaeuser Company Ltd.) may also have a duty to consult. One of the central issues in this case, Mr. Colborne said, is whether First Nations treaty rights have to be proved before consultation is required, or if they can simply be asserted. The Supreme Court of Canada heard arguments in the case on March 24–25, 2004, with over twenty interested parties represented, including every province and territory except P.E.I. The decision is not expected for several months.

Other important issues still to be decided by the Courts include the following:

- A level playing field: since the Crown and many private parties have nearly unlimited resources, while First Nations tend to lack financial resources, is there a requirement to create a more level consultation process?
- Federal duty: at what point is it the federal government's obligation to intervene against the provinces, since the federal government has exclusive authority over "Indians and lands reserved for Indians"?
- Quality of consultation: what components are necessary for real consultation to take place as opposed to "a showering of paperwork and invitations to meetings," solely intended to protect the Crown?
- Community impact agreements: to what extent does research or community impact studies constitute consultations for Aboriginal and treaty right purposes?

Mr. Colborne raised two points in conclusion. The first was that recent case law suggests that First Nations have an obligation to respond to "paper storms:" if they ignore them, they risk being treated as if they had unreasonably refused to participate in consultation. The second is that, at least one recent decision established that the duty to consult applies within First Nations. That is, it establishes that First Nations Councils have fiduciary duties toward their own community members, including the duty to consult with them when dealing with issues regarding jointly-held rights.

During the discussion that ensued after Mr. Colborne's presentation, a participant noted that the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Sustainable Development Institute had developed a consultation protocol that has been accepted by the Chiefs Table in Quebec.

A participant from the Harper Lake Logging and Okanogan Community said his community has been dealing with consultation policy for over ten years. Every time the law or government changes in B.C., he said, the old policy is scrapped. Within the newest policy, front-line Ministry staff are given specific directives on how to deal with First Nations, and the policy also sets out how First Nations must respond to their consultations.

A participant said that, over the years, governments have consulted extensively with First Nations, but failed to act on those consultations. He asked if there had been any court decisions that define the government's obligations to seriously respond to the positions they hear from First Nations during consultation. Mr. Colborne said there had not been any definitive decisions as yet, but each case was judged individually.

Another participant observed that the British Columbia Ministry of Natural Resources increasingly bestows decision-making capabilities to third parties on the land. The government is getting out of land use and planning at the same time as their duty to consult is increasing. Mr. Colborne noted that the Haida case may resolve the issue of third-party duties to consult. The conundrum is that in giving away its power on the land, the government may be giving away its responsibility and duty too. That would raise the question of whether that devolution of responsibility is just.

Parks and Protected Areas

Session Chair: Valerie Courtois, FNFP, Atlantic Management Committee

Protected Areas and Aboriginal Co-management Opportunities

Evan Ferrari, Wildlands League

The Wildlands League is a charitable conservation organization, explained Evan Ferrari. It ultimately works to protect Ontario's Crown lands by creating a network of protected areas, plants, animals, and ecological systems. At the same time, sustainable forestry and mining (economical, ecological, and social) are examined, along with hydro use and water quality.

The Wildlands League works cooperatively with governments, industry, communities, and First Nations by providing technical advice and to some extent, lobbying efforts. Support is given to First Nations in treaty rights.

Protected areas will always include access by First Nations for hunting, fishing, gathering, and traditional use of the landscape. First Nations treaty rights are supported by the Wildlands League. The land claims settlement process will allow First Nations to decide on land designations for traditional areas.

In Ontario, there are two distinct protected area designations: Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves, which are not to be confused with Conservation Areas that exist primarily in Southern Ontario. Provincial Parks fall under the Provincial Parks Act and the Conservation Reserves come under the Public Lands Act.

Protected areas offer an opportunity to protect biological diversity, wildlife, and keep the ecosystem intact and working. The protected areas also provide a gauge of how the rest of the land base is being looked after. In Northwestern Ontario, forestry is taking place outside protected areas, which is a good indication. There are close to 635 parks and conservation areas under protection in Ontario.

Protected areas come under threats from a number of different directions, said Mr. Ferrari. Roads and motorized access have an obvious impact on soil compactness, increased invasion of alien species, pollution of waterways and industrial development. Mining is permitted in 23 provincial parks. Overuse of hunting and fishing by non-Aboriginals is another threat. In addition, recreational developments such as golf courses take out significant vegetation.

The British Columbia First Nations' Chiefs summit held in January 2000 came up with a series of recommendations:

- Recognize the British Columbia government's right to liaise on a government-to-government basis with First Nations to recognize and exercise Constitutional and protected Aboriginal rights.
- Recognize First Nations' decision-making authority in protected areas.
- Enable joint management agreements to allow designation of interim protected areas.
- Ensure that protected areas are only established with the consent of First Nations in their territory and protected areas.

An Integrated Conservation Approach – The Boreal Forest Conservation Framework

Cathy Wilkinson, Canadian Boreal Initiative

Canada's boreal forest is one of the few remaining intact original forests in the world, said Cathy Wilkinson. It is different, special, and rich in biodiversity, home to the largest remaining herd of caribou and largest population of wolves. It also plays a key role in the search for clean air and water.

In addition to physiological values, that boreal is home to hundreds of communities, including many First Nations. It offers thousands of jobs and billions of dollars in resource revenue.

From a physiological, economic, and social perspective, the boreal forest is a region with opportunities for conservation and sustainable development. It supports healthy communities.

At both international and national levels, the boreal forest is something unique. Not only is it one of the largest intact forests on the planet, but also parts of the northern areas have not been allocated to industrial development. This provides an opportunity for an integrated vision that allows planners to look at conservation opportunities.

There are nine jurisdictions in the boreal forests, each with its own responsibilities. Many decisions are being made — some with First Nations involvement — for the boreal that will have a long-term influence on the region. A balanced approach will help to take advantage of the opportunities available. No "cookie cutter" approach will work for the whole region, and the debate is not over, said Ms. Wilkinson.

Ms. Wilkinson acknowledged progressive actions such as the Labrador forest management development. In order to protect Canada's boreal forest, recognition of treaty rights and projects that utilize GIS will be key.

Parks and Protected Areas

Andrew Jourdain, Band Councillor, Lac La Croix First Nation

There are 359 Lac La Croix First Nation people, with 254 residing on First Nations territory in Northwestern Ontario, east of Fort Frances. It is the last community south of the 49th parallel to be isolated.

In 1913, the Quetico forest and game preserve became an Ontario Provincial Park. From 1973 to 1991, motor vehicles were banned from Quetico Park. Between 1991 and 1994, negotiations took place between Lac La Croix First Nation and the Ontario government that resulted in a number of recommendations. The Lac La Croix now run half of Quetico Park. The First Nation and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources continue to work together to maintain Quetico as a wilderness park. Mr. Jourdain said that the Lac La Croix First Nation has a "great relationship" with the Ministry of Natural Resources.

"We are loosing some of the hand-painted cliffs in Quetico," said Mr. Jourdain. "They are going home in people's pockets." The Lac La Croix First Nations interpreters are able to explain and interpret the paintings for visitors, thus helping to preserve them.

Quite a bit has happened since 1994, said Mr. Jourdain. The park has 87 kilometres of gravel road. It also houses an Aboriginal enhanced youth camp and entry station, as well as a cultural healing centre. The Lac La Croix First Nation is looking into roads, fishing management, and forestry products. The future of forestry in the park will depend on the younger generation coming up.

Certification

Session Chair: Jean-Paul Gladu, Aboriginal Strategy Group

Jean-Paul Gladu welcomed delegates and informed the session that one of the speakers listed, Mr. Stephen Ginnish could not be at the conference and that in his place, he had asked Lillian Rose to speak.

Forest Certification Overview

Martin von Mirbach, Sierra Club of Canada

Martin von Mirbach began his presentation by asking a series of questions: What is forest certification? Will forest certification result in improvements? What can I do to ensure that forest certification makes a difference? Acknowledging that there are many different perspectives, Mr. van Mirbach grounded his presentation by outlining two assumptions. The first is that some certification plans are better than others, and that ultimately they are all "just words on paper if they do not result in meaningful actions." The second assumption is that while "most companies want to do the right thing, some have a harder time than others." He suggested that this was in part because companies, financial circumstances, opportunities, and individuals vary.

Forest certification is a "voluntary, non-governmental, independent verification process against a particular standard of a company's forest management system and/or operations, and/or products." He suggested that certification has the potential to make a difference because it can influence the standard, influence a company's decision to use a certain standard, influence the management plan, and influence the activities resulting from that management plan. Influencing the management plan and operations could be of particular benefit to Aboriginal communities. Mr. von Mirbach recommended that Aboriginal communities get involved in the certification process via public participation or by appealing certification. It is important to "put all the issues on the table," and keep them there.

In terms of public participation and appealing certification, the speaker indicated the benefit of documenting everything and the need to commit to regular participation. He stressed the importance of reading and understanding the standard in question, and understanding how this standard works with specific issues. Some of the limitations of certification are that this process cannot change previous "bad land use decisions," nor can it resolve rights and disputes, or social and economic inequalities. However, certification can positively influence all of these issues.

Forest Certification in Canada

Kathy Abusow, Independent Forest Certification Consultant

Kathy Abusow remarked that it became clear to her during the morning plenary just how many important issues there are to work on. In that context, certification seems so humble an issue. Certification will not help with nation building, but could help with capacity building, which helps to force change.

There are differences in the certification standards used across North America, and there are three sustainable forest management certification programs in Canada. Each one is different and addresses Aboriginal and indigenous peoples' rights differently. Principles and standards vary among the three. The speaker said that although it was difficult at this point to gauge the impact of certification, all of the companies she had consulted agreed to follow up on this with a goal to being able to share resources.

It is important to know what the standards say, mean and require in terms of Aboriginal rights. She suggested that there was "an open door for Aboriginal people to identify their values," that are then built into the plan. Even if the standard does not mention Aboriginal concerns specifically, there are means to get Aboriginal values on the table by confronting the company involved.

Certification can, literally, "change things on the ground," and provide a process to include Aboriginal concerns and issues. She stated that according to a company representative she surveyed, when data makes it into a forest management plan, it sets a standard that the company must report back on. The more information included in the plan, the more accountable the company must be.

In conclusion, Ms. Abusow noted that certification has doubled in the last year. There is increasing customer recognition of the SFM standards used in Canada.

Role of Assessors in Auditing Indigenous Peoples Issues in FSC Certification

Peggy Smith, Lakehead University
Jean-Paul Gladu, Aboriginal Strategy Group
Lillian Rose, Tembec Inc.

Peggy Smith began her discussion with the following questions: What is independent auditing? Who does it? Why should Aboriginal peoples learn about auditing? To begin, she explained that independent auditing is a formal process carried out by third party independent auditors. Examples of third party assessors include the Province of Ontario, the Canadian Standards Association, and the Forest Stewardship Council, all of whom utilize accredited auditors. Auditors need to be watched, as they have a lot of influence over how standards are interpreted — something that is of particular relevance to Aboriginal peoples. Well-trained auditors are needed who understand Aboriginal issues, local contexts, traditional knowledge values, indigenous rights, and treaty issues.

Next, Mr. Gladu provided delegates with an overview of a recent Forest Standards Council Smartwood Assessor Training workshop that took place over three and half days, previous to the conference. The workshop was very comprehensive. It included teamwork exercises, review of auditing basics and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) principles and criteria, and provided political, legal, and historical background on Indigenous peoples in Canada's boreal forests. The training also included a presentation by landowners as well as interviews with a landowner and other stakeholders. At the end of the training, participants were able to determine whether they were interested in becoming assessors or auditors. The reporting process helped participants see how information gathered is based on the questions asked.

Lillian Rose, one of the participants in the FSC / Smartwood Assessor Training workshop, reported on the experience. She said it was encouraging to participate with so many young Aboriginal people working in the forest industry. The course, while very intense, was also great fun and Ms. Rose thanked all of the participants for making it that way. Certification is not the answer to all of the problems related to forest management, but it is a tool to assist with capacity development, Aboriginal rights, employment, and sustainable development. It is also a means to implement sustainable development. She concluded by stating that knowledge is powerful when it is shared.

Morning Plenary Session

Session Chair: Ross Barclay, Manager, Land Planning, Lands Directorate, Lands and Trusts Services, INAC

Weyerhaeuser and Aboriginal Relationships in Canada

Stephen M. Smith, Weyerhaeuser Company Ltd.

Stephen Smith explained that he is the President of Wapawekka Lumber — a sawmill operated as a joint venture between Weyerhaeuser and three Saskatchewan First Nations, in addition to being Weyerhaeuser's Manager for Canadian Forest Lands, Sustainability and Stewardship.

Weyerhaeuser employs 55,000 people in 18 countries, with nearly $20 billion in annual sales. In Canada, the company harvests over 12 million hectares of (primarily) Crown land, with forest operations in five provinces and 10,000 employees in Canada. Over 110 First Nations live on lands impacted by Weyerhaeuser's business operations, which include engineered products, pulp, hardwood lumber, wholesale building products, and coastal lumber.

Weyerhaeuser's operations are generally structured along business lines. However, because of the unique regional and political realities in Canada, it has also organized itself by region. Each province has its own regional council that manages relationships with the public, stakeholders, and government.

Mr. Smith described Canada's approach to forest management as extensive, rather than intensive. The dependence on Crown forests is unique.

Several factors, including competition with fast-grown tropical woods and new tropical pulp and paper factories, have had a significant impact on North American forestry operations in the last ten years, he said. However, forest products are a renewable resource and still the best way to serve public needs for shelter and communications.

Weyerhaeuser developed its Aboriginal policy for a variety of business reasons:

- To ensure continued access to competitive fibre;
- To comply with legal requirements regarding adequate consultation and land management; and,
- To harness the energy, enthusiasm and innovative spirit of First Nations to build and develop a strong work force that will meet today's and future needs.

Because Weyerhaeuser is such a large company and acquisitions have left it with many different management systems, it is important to develop consistent approaches to bring the company together with one voice.

The Aboriginal policy acknowledges that every First Nations community is unique, said Mr. Smith. It establishes a set of principles and specific focus areas that can be used as a road map for managing relationships with First Nations. Some of the focus areas for specific emphasis and measurement include direct and indirect employment, business alliance development, internal and external education, and training and community development.

The policy is built on a series of principles to guide relationship building, Mr. Smith said. Through it, Weyerhaeuser seeks to do the following:

- Acknowledge Aboriginal culture, and build understanding of Aboriginal culture, heritage, and tradition, while respecting Aboriginal status and points of view;
- Engage in ongoing communication so there are no surprises for the company or communities;
- Work with Aboriginal leadership to help develop capable leadership;
- Enhance the value of resources through fair, equitable and mutually beneficial relationships; and,
- Generate realistic expectations that recognize the rights of stakeholders and with treaty settlement negotiations.

These principles have led to some recent changes in policy, Mr. Smith said. These have included more focus on Aboriginal business alliances, a willingness to address problems that already exist within business operations and joint ventures, and increased recognition of the importance of internal education. There is also a growing recognition that the types of jobs for First Nations today are primarily in the forest, while the largest number of jobs and best opportunities are actually in factories and processing.

Among the successes Weyerhaeuser has experienced with the new policy are the following:

- A successful Aboriginal recruitment at the Kenora Trus Joist Plant start-up;
- Business alliances, such as the Iisaak/Wabigoon Anishnaabe Gitigewin seedling nursery;
- Internal leadership education; and
- Education and training, including a bursary program for young people wishing to pursue careers in forestry.

One of the important features of the Aboriginal policy at Weyerhaeuser is that it contains metrics for assessing success, Mr. Smith said. Data collected for 2001 revealed over 100 individual business relationships, providing direct and indirect employment in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, and New Brunswick, valued at nearly $43 million.

While the policy has seen many successes, there continue to be areas that are disappointing, such as the failure to provide more direct employment at established mills and limited ability to work with the Haida in British Columbia while their court case is pending.

Strategies for Aboriginal Capacity Building

Andrew Popko, EnCana Corporation

Andrew Popko explained that EnCana is the largest independent oil and gas company in North America. It is Canadian-based and owned with operations in South America, Africa, North America, and the Middle East. It employs 5500 people, with a head office in Calgary and a satellite office in Denver, Colorado.

Mr. Popko reminded participants that the "stone age" did not end because the world ran out of stones. Rather, he said, it was because people changed and moved in new directions. Including Aboriginal people in business ventures does not mean loss of culture for the Aboriginal people or the corporate organization. It is just a case of evolution and change.

To build good long-term relationships with Aboriginal people, he said, it is important to have a vision, passion, and a clear action plan. Relationships require partnerships that must include First Nations, communities, companies, and the federal and provincial governments. It is important for all parties to know and understand the stakeholders.

In Canada, Mr. Popko observed, there are 1.3 million Aboriginal people, one-third of whom are under the age of fifteen. This fact provides an invaluable opportunity to train young people to become part of the changing, technology-driven work force. However, even as the number of First Nations college and university graduates is increasing, unemployment on reserves continues to increase, as does the loss of First languages.

Mr. Popko said companies need to ask themselves whether they have a well articulated, clear, focused Aboriginal policy or guidelines. In the oil and gas industry, only 58 per cent of companies do, while fewer than 20 per cent of suppliers have Aboriginal policies. EnCana encourages its suppliers to develop policies so they can help EnCana "work with our neighbours in the field."

Going into First Nations communities, EnCana often encounters initial hostility to its operations, Mr. Popko said. First reactions are often opposed to any type of operations anywhere on traditional territories because First Nations, understandably, want to preserve their traditional lifestyles. To overcome this initial reluctance and to work together for mutual benefit requires building trust and strong communications.

Mr. Popko outlined some of the approaches used to manage risks with First Nations communities:

- Respect First Nations' rights.
- Consult in good faith.
- Document your efforts — not for the courts, but to keep communication clear.
- Hire locally whenever possible.
- Separate business from politics.
- Focus on solutions — discuss the best ways to get access to a particular resource.
- Take information and advice from the Elders; respect them and what they say.• Be consistent in your approach; treat all Métis and First Nations groups equally.
- Identify local communities that are present on the land where projects are slated to occur or who might be impacted.
- Engage all levels of government.
- Celebrate your successes and include First Nations in those celebrations.

Mr. Popko described a number of drilling rig partnerships with Aboriginal groups. Ten First Nations groups own nine drilling rigs in partnership with other companies. Using their own funds and INAC grants,

the communities bought into the joint ventures. When extraction is happening, First Nations communities see the benefits of the new ventures through employment, revenue for the community, and increased "ownership" and control of the process.

Within ten years, Mr. Popko said, there will be a severe labour shortage in skilled trades. This will lead to better wages and more bargaining power for workers in those trades. The large pool of young Aboriginal people is a great potential resource to meet these future needs. To assist in training them, EnCana has initiated two mobile education units for First Nations apprenticeships. They go to reserves and train young people within their own communities.

For an Aboriginal policy to be successful, Mr. Popko concluded, there must be senior management buy-in and support from Aboriginal leadership, core principles must be maintained, communication must be strong and clear, and stakeholders must be accountable.

Sustainable Forest Management

Session Chair: Alain Dubois, FNFP, Canadian Forest Service, Natural Resources Canada

Integration of Traditional Knowledge, Values and Science in Forest Land Use Planning

Dr. Alan J. Thomson, Canadian Forest Service, Natural Resources Canada

Dr. Thomson began his presentation on the "Integration of traditional knowledge, values, and science in forest land use planning," by acknowledging the Fort William First Nation and all of the councils that have helped him learn how to integrate Western and Aboriginal knowledge. He defined knowledge as that which is "justified true belief" (Schmoldt and Rauscher 1996). Traditional knowledge is that which is justified based on experience and respect for the source. It is based upon individual, family, and community knowledge that is current, historical, and always changing. Traditional knowledge considers the whole world; it is a holistic, long-term approach grounded in the local region. Science is that which is justified based on scientific method and statistical tests. It is both quantitative and qualitative, based on assumptions, expertise, and controls and seeks to create objective and reproducible "expert" results. Dr. Thomson added that he viewed First Nations' holders of knowledge as experts. Traditional knowledge translates into expertise.

In terms of forest resource assessment, each province has a different approach to inventory methods, classifications, definitions, and prediction methods. However, each of these approaches is based in science. Traditional knowledge plays a very important role in determining the assessment process as it can determine what gets measured, where and when, why, how, by whom, and in whose interest. Dr. Thomson emphasized the key role that these elements play in the planning process and said that the "five Ws" ultimately determine a vision for what is to be expected from the land. Subsequently, forest landuse plans identify the process and participants for the plan, and reflect what was done in the assessment stage. Using traditional knowledge serves to build protection and alternatives into the plan.

Dr. Thomson cited some examples of how the scientific approach is applied to landscape unit planning, and how using Geographical Information Systems (GIS) allows this data to be used to create visual representation of proposed harvesting outcomes. He then turned to the impact that traditional knowledge has when included with scientific data in landscape scale planning. Traditional knowledge offers alternative perspectives to scientific assumptions and concepts that influence how the area for harvest is constrained and the size compositions of buffers for interior habitat, corridor design, and the development of indicators and monitoring plans.

There are many opportunities for traditional knowledge to be included in forest land planning at different levels. He emphasized the importance of knowing and understanding the concepts behind the approaches of the other major groups involved (especially government), and said that these processes can be designed in such a way that respect the First Nations' approach to knowledge sharing and deliberation, "in which traditional knowledge not only survives but also flourishes."

Sustainable Forest Development Can Be Achieved By Enabling the First Nations to Manage, Plan and Develop Their Lands

Michel Mongeon, First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Sustainable Development Institute

Referring to the conference theme, "Creating a New Climate for Aboriginal Forestry," Michael Mongeon stated that Aboriginal peoples in Quebec are looking at ways to integrate traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) in order to move toward sustainable development. At the foundation of this approach is the link between TEK and collective rights. The connection between community-based organizations and TEK is an indication of the move toward the protection of the rights and resources of Aboriginal peoples.

A sustainable development strategy was adopted in 1997. Specific issues of the strategy include the conservation of the land and sustainability of its resources, the protection and strengthening of Aboriginal cultures and languages, social and economic development, participation in decision-making processes, and the need to enter into partnerships. There are conflicting visions of development. The First Nations model is "based on the belief that Mother Earth nurtures and sustains her children, and that her children must adapt to, and respect, Mother Earth (Aboriginal societies have already been subjected to the test of experience)." The Colonial model "is one where the exploitation of natural resources aims at meeting individual and collective needs and does not respect territory sustainable survival." Hence, there is a need for an Aboriginal approach that has conservation as its guiding principle and provides for the integration of rights and access.

The integration of TEK and community-based management of the forest validates territorial rights and oversees all consultation processes. Mr. Mongeon outlined the steps to implementing a community-based management plan, including the need to define a common vision of the territory and its management (allocation plan) as determined by the community itself. This requires the empowerment of the communities and the individuals within it and an adaptive management approach. Implementation steps with partners include the development of an information-sharing protocol and the "harmonization" of guidelines to ensure the implementation of a real community-based participation process. He added that First Nations "should have the power to set their objectives, principles, and standards in all certification processes."

Developing a Research-Based Strategy for Aboriginal Involvement in Forest Management

Clifford Hickey, Sustainable Forest Management Network

Clifford Hickey acknowledged the Fort William First Nation, and explained that the Sustainable Forest Management Network is entering its tenth year. The network is comprised of seven provinces, twelve forest companies, five First Nations, and assorted other organizations interested in forests. It is one of 22 networks designated as a Centre for Excellence as determined by granting bodies and Industry Canada. The Sustainable Forest Management Network (SFMN) is the only one with any Aboriginal presence.

"Sustainable forests are about sustainable communities," stated Mr. Hickey. The elements that must be considered in sustainable resource management include policies and institutions, water and wetlands, sustainable Aboriginal communities, economic and social indicators, and value added and non-timber forest products. The SFMN looks for as many of the elements as possible when soliciting research proposals, as well as the viability of these projects in Aboriginal communities. He stated that the SFMN tries to look at the "big picture," which Aboriginal communities have always understood. The full involvement of Aboriginal communities is "not an option, but a necessity." He cited the SFMN's partnership with the Little Red River First Nation in Alberta. Together they are working to create a sustainable forest management framework. This will be the first model framework of its kind and could become a model for other First Nations.

Research undertaken by the SFMN recognizes the importance of the economic and social issues that impact on all of the resources in a community. Mr. Hickey emphasized the need to remember how different it is for each First Nation. The SFMN is looking into concerns about Aboriginal timber tenures.

New Directions in National and International Policy

Session Chair: Nelson Toulouse, Deputy Grand Council Chief, Anishinabek Nation – Union of Ontario Indians

International Influences on National Policy

Harry Bombay, National Aboriginal Forestry Association

Harry Bombay said there are a number of different processes operating at the global, international, national, provincial, and local levels that impact upon Aboriginal forestry policies in Canada. On the national level, he said, it is important to integrate, coordinate, and formulate approaches that will be consistent with international as well as regional directions.

A lot of policy work on human rights and sustainable development is focused through the United Nations, Mr. Bombay said. The globalization phenomenon has decreased the importance of international borders, while trade agreements have been put in place that level the playing field for companies working internationally. As a result, environmental sustainability and Aboriginal People's issues tend to get wrapped into trade agreements. While indigenous people address some of their issues through UN processes, they are also starting to organize and form groups to work around their indigenous rights and values. There are over 400 million indigenous people globally, whose rights and cultures are recognized to varying degrees. Indigenous rights groups are working to gain consistency in the acknowledgement and application of those rights.

Forest and resource management and sustainable development are the keystone of indigenous values, Mr. Bombay said, and must be part of every initiative. However, indigenous peoples' cultures continue to be threatened in many parts of the world. Many have lost their cultures.

In terms of implementation of sustainability and forestry management initiatives, there are many regional initiatives structured between countries in a given area, such as North American Free Trade Agreement, European Union, the Organization of American States, and the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO). Increasingly, these regional international agreements affect indigenous peoples.

There are four broad areas of work that influence Aboriginal forest policy on the national level:

- The federal government through forest research, science and technology initiatives, international trade agreements, biodiversity and climate change initiatives, lands and fiduciary duties related to Aboriginal affairs
- The Canadian Council of Forest Ministers dealing with issues like the softwood lumber dispute, national forest management and the national forest information system
- Non-governmental organizations and industry associations that conduct forest certification and forest research and advocacy, such as the Forest Stewardship Council and Boreal Forest Conservation Framework, which aims to set aside 50% of the boreal forest for conservation initiatives, while the other half remains working forest
- National Aboriginal organizations, such as the Assembly of First Nations, who deal with Aboriginal and treaty rights, self-government issues, advocacy and representation.

Issues such as stumpage agreements and maintenance of revenue sources from forestry are dealt with at the provincial level (forest management unit level). The forestry sector contributes over $9 billion annually to provincial coffers, so there is a lot of concern about how tenure systems protect government revenue bases.

At the local level, industry is involved directly in forest management, but it tends to behave differently in each province. For example, said Mr. Bombay, there are many joint ventures in British Columbia and Saskatchewan, while First Nations in Ontario do not own any forest-based tenure.

More and more, NGOs and society are becoming involved in forest management, he said, which necessitates First Nations peoples continually re-examining their relationships with non-Aboriginal societies in their given areas.

Mr. Bombay elaborated on the mechanisms for dealing with key issues surrounding Aboriginal peoples and human rights at the United Nations level. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the main instrument that deals with human rights, but there are other UN Charter-based bodies, including the Working Group on Indigenous Populations (WGIP) that has conducted studies on the effect of treaties in Canada. There are also six major international human rights treaties that protect social and cultural rights. The draft UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is the product of a working group, which includes over one hundred indigenous organizations. Even though the Decade of Indigenous Peoples is nearing its end, that declaration is still incomplete.

Another new advisory body is the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, which focuses on economic and social development, culture, health, education and the environment. This group has only met once formally, but includes two Canadian representatives.

Forestry issues are dealt with in many different ways within the UN, Mr. Bombay said. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is the key organization responsible for agriculture, fisheries, and forests. At the World Food Summit, indigenous peoples' representatives connected the need for forest management with the subsistence needs of indigenous peoples. Based on that intervention, NAFA made a presentation on indigenous peoples and food security issues and tries to establish a link between the Permanent Forum and the FAO.

The UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) resulted in the adoption of a number of instruments, including Agenda 21, he explained. These instruments were turned over to the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF) to facilitate country and multi-stakeholder dialogue. One of the key clauses in the UNCED forestry principles states that"...national forest policies should recognize and duly support the identity, culture and rights of indigenous peoples, their communities, and other communities and forest dwellers. Appropriate conditions should be promoted for these groups to enable them to have an economic stake in forest use, perform economic activities, and achieve and maintain cultural identity and social organization."

Although Canada was a proponent of this clause, said Mr. Bombay, it is not well applied in this country.

One of UNFF's key goals is to take key issues from past work and develop them into a more focused plan of action. The forum is also expected to push for the development of a legally-binding international convention on forests. Some other key initiatives that UNFF is addressing include the following:

- Forest-related traditional and scientific knowledge
- Social and cultural aspects of forests
- Criteria and indicators for measuring sustainable forest management.

The resolution of Aboriginal forestry issues need not be inconsistent with the current directions of international trade, said Mr. Bombay. Indigenous peoples' input can assist in resolving international trade issues. However, it is important that indigenous peoples be involved, not just in harvesting, but in processing, networking, and marketing of forest products and have a better presence in international marketing that will drive other areas of potential involvement.

Role of Assessors in Auditing Indigenous Peoples Issues in FSC Certification

Peggy Smith, Lakehead University

Peggy Smith, Lakehead University, stressed the importance of having individual First Nations present themselves internationally as whole nations, such as Ojibwa or Cree, rather than as Bands. The UN was formed as an organization of nation states. For Aboriginal people to be recognized as equal partners in the international arena, they need to come forward and demand recognition as nations too. The UN structure recognizes country and nation, so it is critical for indigenous peoples to assert their rights and their equality with national states. In order to push for that recognition, she said, it is necessary to be well organized internally and to make important political decisions beforehand.

Model Forests — Aboriginal Initiatives

Session Chair: Jamie Honda McNeil, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, Government of Alberta

Model Forest — Aboriginal Initiatives

Richard Verbisky, International Model Forest Network Secretariat

Richard Verbisky introduced his presentation on the International Model Forest Network with a definition of model forests. Model forests are large-scale areas in which partners work together to institute policy at a local level. Model forests should be committed to sustainable forest management, should be partnership based, and should be large enough to reflect the diversity of interests in the forest. Mr. Verbisky emphasized that a partnership needs resources. Canadian regulations for model forests stipulate that indigenous peoples have to be included. This policy has been practiced throughout the world.

The Model Forest Program was piloted in Canada in the early 1990s with success. Canada then took the program to the international scene because of increasing conflict over resource planning and because it was an answer to the dead ends that were being experienced. This program made sense because "no one can do it alone," said Mr. Verbisky, and there is a need to integrate disciplines and see sustainable forest management as a long-term approach rather than a project.

The Model Forest Program is growing steadily with 11 sites in Canada, and participation from six countries in Latin America, five sites in Asia, and interest from Africa and Russia. Mr. Verbisky noted that Sweden would soon be joining the Network. There are a number of partners involved in the Network including the United Nations organizations, international organizations, local level partners, and the Canadian Model Forest Network and its partners.

The Model Forest Program has created a number of results:

- Increased ability to leverage resources
- Conflict abatement
- Strengthened policy
- Partnerships between the government and civil society and
- Poverty alleviation

Mr. Verbisky summarized various lessons learned from the program. The same program concept is valid across different ecosystems. Partnerships take time to demonstrate their net worth. Sustainable forest management must demonstrate tangible benefits, show that "networking works," and use programs that are country driven and regionally led.

Some of the indicators of sustainability are the program's durability and growth. Mr. Verbisky concluded that the program owed its stability, in part, to the shared and reduced risk for everyone.

The International Model Forest Network Secretariat provides support for many components including the following:

- Advocacy
- Growth
- Networking
- Communication
- Technical support and
- Program Integrity

Mr. Verbisky then gave some examples of Aboriginal participation in model forests. The Gassinski Model Forest, located in the far east of Russia, had a bleak economic situation with high unemployment.

One of its biggest accomplishments, not to be understated, was the development of a long-term sustainable economic development strategy for the Model Forest Region. Among other accomplishments, the Model Forest created effective cross-disciplinary partnerships, and increased employment for the indigenous Nanai people from 20 to more than 60%.

Another example of Aboriginal participation in model forestry is the Araucarias del Alto Malleco, Chile, which started in 1999. One of the goals of this project was maintaining cultural diversity by protecting the monkey-puzzle tree, which is sacred to the local indigenous people. Forest management and protection were other key goals. This program accomplished many of its goals such as establishing a board of directors, planting trees, improving grasslands, and providing funds for 12 local projects. Mr. Verbisky concluded his presentation with a list of the IMFN's next steps, which involved broadening and strengthening the regional sites and mainstreaming the program approach.

The Moose Habitat Project

Hugo Jacqmain, Laval University

Hugo Jacqmain introduced his presentation on the moose habitat project with an explanation of why he had chosen this to establish the compatibility of large-scale logging, fishing, and resource development with the local populations.

Natural resource development in the project area of Waswanipi Cree First Nation had been characterized by historical and cultural conflict. The Ndoho Istchee project gathered information and research on model forests to make a forest management plan for the Waswanipi Cree First Nation, and disseminate this information to the community. The Waswanipi Model Forest approach was derived in part from the research in Waswanipi on moose habitat. Mr. Jacqmain said that it is his belief that conflicts can be resolved in forest management by developing complementary relationships. Moose habitats were researched because they are the main food source for the Cree. In addition, the moose populations were at a critical level and their habitat was a limiting factor for development. The project combined expertise from the Cree Nation and science with involvement from all stakeholders.

Mr. Jacqmain stressed the importance of the involvement of the Waswanipi Cree First Nation throughout the project. The project evaluated the moose habitat preferences, the importance of corridor habitats, and site fidelity. An evaluation concluded that the mosaic-cutting pattern was much better than a conventional forest cutting style for the moose populations. This research combined with the traditional knowledge of the Cree to propose better forest management strategies, partnerships and make recommendations to the Cree-Quebec Forest Board. Mr. Jacqmain concluded his presentation with a short video showing the process of tagging and studying some of the moose in Waswanipi.

Canadian Model Forest Network Aboriginal Strategic Initiative, Standards for Aboriginal Cultural Research in Forest Management Planning in Canada

Wendy Vasbinder, Canada's Model Forest Program

Wendy Vasbinder presented Dr. Doug Elias' study Standards for Aboriginal Cultural Research in Forest Management Planning in Canada supported by the Aboriginal Strategic Initiative Model Forest Program. All model forests work with Aboriginal people: there are common issues to address. "This is where the Aboriginal Strategic Initiative comes in," she said, explaining that specific Aboriginal objectives included providing leadership on forest management. The Aboriginal Strategic Initiative (ASI) is directed by a steering committee.

The Canadian Model Forest Aboriginal Strategic Initiative has undertaken three projects in 2003–2004 focused on developing good and sustainable Aboriginal forest management practices. In 2004–2005 it will

continue to measure good forest management practices with Stage 2 of the previous year's "Standards Project" and do ongoing project planning.

The "Standards Project" is researching what is going on in forest management and how it is changing. One of the questions of this study was to examine the history of landuse studies. Dr. Elias found that the studies developed out of law and policy on Aboriginal rights in Canada. Unfortunately, this foundation in legal cases has made this important research about Aboriginal values quite inaccessible to other parties who need to access it, due to confidentiality issue.

Some of the best practices of this research are maps, harvest studies, toponymy, oral history, and traditional knowledge studies. Ms. Vasbinder mentioned that a lot of Dr. Elias' research draws on the expertise of other experienced Aboriginal people such as Mr. Terry Tobias.

Ms. Vasbinder then cited some of the policies and regulations related to the incorporation of Aboriginal values in forest management planning, adding that even though it is clear that consultation is required, no funding was available for it. More information is needed to know how provincial and federal policies are influencing forest management practices. Phase 2 objectives are to prepare case studies on Aboriginal communities, look at the drivers of the process, synthesize the information from the case studies, and develop a recommendation as to when or how data from landuse research can be used in forest management planning.

Making Forestry Services Viable

Session Chair: J.R. Giroux, FNFP, Alberta Management Committee

Making Forest Services Viable – A Tribal Council Point of View

Jukka Heikurinen, Mamaweswen — North Shore Tribal Council

It is a major challenge for Aboriginal communities to gain access to forest resources, said Jukka Heikurinen. This is not just a matter of cutting trees.

Over 20 years ago, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (INAC) eliminated its forestry staff, leaving a major void in forest management. Therefore, in the mid 1980s, the North Shore Tribal Council (NSTC) was established to take over this vacancy in forest management.

In the 1980s and early 90s the Canada - Ontario Forest Resources Development Agreement assisted with financial resources to prepare six forest management plans for the NSTC First Nations' Chiefs and interested parties. Some silviculture work was also carried out.

However, several problems were encountered. There was no forestry staff earmarked to work and control the cut, no stumpage or permit fees were collected, and no plans were in place for First Nations to participate in harvesting the timber.

To alleviate the problems, the NSTC Forestry Unit was established under the Northern Ontario Development Agreement (NODA) to help develop the forestry program. Professionals were hired and the Forestry Unit was started. From 1992 to 1996, NSTC Forestry Unit developed a system to provide cutting permits to control harvesting and meet the environmental requirements set out by INAC. Job specifications were developed and site preparation and tree planting began.

GIS software and hardware for the digitalization of all forest equipment for all seven First Nations was put in place. Some services were contracted to the Ontario Ministry Natural Resources for data collecting and tree planting on Crown lands.

The Forestry Unit produced its first paper calculating basic functions of $10 an acre per year for minimum regulatory components, silviculture, and forest management. To carry out the collection of stumpage and basic functions the cost would be $4 an acre per year or 40% of total costs.

With the passing into law in 1995 of the new Crown Forest Sustainability Act, the NODA program ended. First Nations attempted to negotiate framework agreements with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Sustainable Forest Licence Holders.

Making Forest Services Viable

Jim Webb, Little Red River Cree First Nation, Corporate and Intergovernmental Relations

Little Red River Cree Nation (LRRCN) is facing a dilemma in obtaining forest tenures on Crown lands and gaining ownership of forested lands through claims. The current, market-driven trend toward "certification" is resulting in changes to incorporate management regimes within Canada's forests. It has set out to have a minimum of 20% of forestry in one form or another returned to First Nations. As well, LRRCN is changing the relationship of marketing and managing forests and the provision of environment services and obtaining tenure, and the way forest resources are managed.

First Nations must be engaged in the dialogue for a market-oriented approach, about costs/benefits of market-driven changes to forest management, and emergence of "environmental service markets." This dialogue should explore what forest services will be provided, who should "own" these services, and who should pay for services to be traded in new markets.

What will market creation mean for poor peoples in third world countries? Most of the people in the third world are indigenous people, said Mr. Webb. In Canada, the reservation population lives in third country conditions. Eighty-five to ninety-five per cent of some First Nations populations are unemployed. Eighty-five per cent of native reserves are situated in Canadian forests. Ninety-nine per cent of timber resources are allocated to non-Aboriginal corporations.

In 1996, LRRCN obtained forest tenure and is now undertaking to change the way forest resources are managed. There are continued talks about the need to manage the forest; however, the forest must be used in accordance with First Nations' vision of their relationships with all other things. LRRCN council has to balance its economic development needs with the need to ensure that the forest can continue to support the cultural sustainability of its people.

Among the priorities of LRRCN to change and develop forestry practices are: creating economic employment and training for people, creating Aboriginal guides, addressing wildlife concerns, and setting agreements to sell timber. Cultural sustainability needs to look at the environment service markets as a tool to market value timber as a commodity market exists.

Mr. Webb said that the three criteria for the development of an ecological footprint model include cultural resource inventory, resource commodity use inventory, and inventory of activity based cultural and economic uses/ecological settings that involve berry patches and medicine plants, the settings of which are always changing.

Following Through on Business Development Opportunities in the Forestry Sector

Peter Higgelke, KBM Forestry Consultants, Inc.

Peter Higgelke introduced the company he works for, KBM Forestry Consultants, Inc. The company offers a wide range of services — consulting and technical services, sales and service, and site preparation and contracting — for forestry management. It has people working in Canada, Sweden, and Chile.

Partnerships in the forestry management business help to provide more jobs while allowing an owner to shape the team it wants, pool resources, share legal work, and learn from the experience of companies with proven track records. On the negative side for some, there is a need to share control.

KBM also offers site preparation services and works with First Nations to provide background and business acumen and experience, prepare First Nations to take over operations, and find solutions to problems. It can also act as an intermediary between First Nations and the forestry industry, help to develop credit, and provide training for equipment operators and supervisors.

Asked if forestry companies have information about the effect of their practices, Mr. Higgelke said that forestry companies try to leave grandfather trees intact, but do not invest the time and money necessary to determine how many coniferous trees have to be left so that squirrels and fur-bearing animals can have a habitat.

Mr. Heikurinen replied that in Ontario, there is no planning process database and wildlife inventories are weak.

Luncheon Address

Bill Meades, Director General, Great Lakes Forest Centre, Canadian Forest Service, Natural Resources Canada, on behalf of the Honourable R. John Efford, P.C., M.P., Minister of Natural Resources Canada

Mr. Bill Meades thanked Mr. Brian Wilson for his introduction, and stated that he was very pleased to address the conference on behalf of the Honourable R. John Efford, Minister of Natural Resources Canada. He acknowledged some of the honoured guests, including Ontario Regional Chief Charles Fox and Elders Wilson and Snow. He thanked the Fort William First Nation for welcoming and hosting the conference in its traditional territory. He recognized that the conference had attracted many participants who are passionate about forestry, and who desire to bring a stronger Aboriginal voice to forestry management. "Today, I'd especially like to celebrate the partnership among First Nations, governments, and industry and present the Government of Canada's perspective on how that partnership is enhancing the First Nations Forestry Program," he said. In the Speech from the Throne, the government has committed to a new partnership with Aboriginal people. As a result, the government has created a Cabinet Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister had also appointed a Parliamentary secretary on Aboriginal Affairs that will help to provide the strengthened voice for Aboriginal Canadians that everyone desires.

Mr. Meades delivered a number of key messages:

- Partnerships among First Nations, governments, and industry are the key to the success of the First Nations Forestry Program.
- The First Nations Forestry Program is expanding from local activities and now includes project partnership opportunities on a regional scale.
- As Aboriginal people gain influence in forest management, a new climate for Aboriginal forestry is emerging.

Mining is one industry in which Aboriginal communities can express their autonomy. Forestry is another important endeavour for Aboriginal communities as more than 80 per cent of these communities are located in or around forested areas. This is key to providing economic development opportunities for the majority of these communities. Mr. Meades added that the attachment to forests is more than economic, as forests are a traditional source of culture and spirituality, as well as livelihood. Hence it is important to enhance the capacity of First Nations to access and manage forest resources. Natural Resources Canada has been involved with local and regional Aboriginal communities to promote sustainable forest management. He added that the Government of Canada's primary program to encourage participation is the First Nations Forestry Program (FNFP).

Since 1996, the FNFP has provided opportunities to learn and apply skills to forestry. This program has led to 1300 projects in 375 First Nation communities across Canada. The program's partners, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and Natural Resources Canada, have provided $36 million dollars in funding since 1996. However, he stated that the real measure of success has been its ability to bring on new additional partners increasing support to $103 million dollars, and increasing the number of projects to 165 with 171 partners. These partners do more than bring in funds; they also participate on committees alongside First Nations.

He shared some of the success stories from the program. In Ontario, the Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation is pursuing forest management tenure in partnership with Timberline Forest

Inventory Corporation. Another example is the Kiiwetino Ma"iingan Shared Forest Stewardship, in which 11 First Nations in Manitoba are working in equal partnerships with Tembec Corporation to pursue sustainable development. This project is expected to create more than 300 jobs, and provide lumber for building homes in First Nations territories. First Nations will ultimately own the project. He added that because of recent land claim decisions and more off-reserve lands under the tenure of First Nations communities, there is increased influence over forest related activities.

Quality of life has not kept pace with this influence, however. Mr. Meads spoke of the need for First Nations to develop the skills needed to ease urban migration pressures, especially in the West. These developments will contribute to regional economic stability across Canada. He added that the FNFP is evolving to meet changing needs and opportunities. The program is a partner in the Manitoba and Ontario Aboriginal Junior Ranger programs and HRSD's Aboriginal Skills and Employment Partnership Program. He added that NRCan is also pursuing opportunities through the Canadian Model Forest Network. The network's Aboriginal Strategic Initiative is promoting the inclusion of Aboriginal practices and values in forest management and stewardship. He stated that all of the partnerships he mentioned required many partners working together to create economic opportunities for all.

Mr. Meades said that there is a new climate in First Nations forestry leadership. Forest managers increasingly recognize Aboriginal forest and cultural values. He suggested that through partnerships created by the FNFP, Aboriginal peoples have more say in how their forests are managed. This means that forest management includes traditional forest values to a greater degree. "Aboriginal Canadians will be able to share more fully in our nation's good fortune, which will enhance the quality of life of all Canadians," he said. He wished everyone a successful and productive conference and thanked the delegates for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Minister.

Education Session

Confederation College

Peggy Smith welcomed delegates to the lunchtime education session held at Confederation College. Before introducing the scheduled speakers, Ms. Smith provided background information on the Northern Aboriginal Youth Employment program, also known as the First Nations Ranger program. The context of the program derives from the understanding of the importance of approaching First Nations youth while they are still in high school, as many Aboriginal youth leave school without acquiring math and science credits. The Forest Technical program offered at the college is a multi-level, comprehensive program where students learn different techniques and a range of skills. Upon completion, students are encouraged to go into the Forest Development program also offered at the college. This program provides the training required to become a Registered Professional Forester (RPF). Ms. Smith stressed how important it is to train Aboriginal peoples as "they are the people on the ground." It is also important to have "people at the table with influence" who value traditional knowledge and land uses. Ms. Smith concluded that educational sessions such as this are needed to discuss the different levels and concerns about forestry and education, and preparation of Aboriginal youth for careers in forestry.

Ken VanEvery, R.P.F. Post Graduate Student, Lakehead University

Speaking about the "Challenges facing Canadian University Forestry Schools," Ken VanEvery outlined his own path to becoming a Registered Professional Forester. He is from the Six Nations First Nation, and after failing his first year of post-secondary education he was persuaded to take the Forest Technical program in which he excelled. Mr. VanEvery is currently working on his Master's degree and is working on a research project jointly with the Sustainable Forest Management Network, University of Alberta. The

purpose of the project is to assess the education preparation for forestry professionals, the challenges they will face in their careers, Aboriginal participation, and the social dimension of sustainable forest management. This project primarily assesses university programs.

The anticipated outcomes of this joint research program include the evaluation of required courses and a determination of whether or not the Registered Professional Foresters emerge with an adequate knowledge base. Mr. VanEvery added that the role of communication between foresters, associations, education institutions, and Aboriginal groups will be important to evaluate.

David Archibald, Confederation College

The Forestry Technical Program at Confederation College is a two-year program that includes a four-month paid summer placement. The college also offers a one-year forest operators program. The training that operators receive is crucial — they make decisions onsite and need to know what they are doing. The first semester is a combination of both programs, and both streams are taught how to name and measure things in the forest. Mr. Archibald stated that he is frequently asked for educated Aboriginal students to work in the forestry sector. Within the next five years, there will be a significant number of educated Aboriginal foresters graduating from the programs offered at the college. Over the next two decades, the Aboriginal population of Northern Ontario is expected to grow significantly. He concluded his talk by emphasizing the growing opportunities available to educated youth.

Gordon Prest, Faculty of Forestry, University of British Columbia

Gordon Prest spoke about some of the challenges in British Columbia in terms of education and youth. High schools in B.C. are failing Aboriginal communities: most Aboriginal youth do not graduate with the requirements to get into college. One of the ways this is being addressed is through the creation of a new summer camp that will allow First Nations youth to experience forestry as a career. The program will accommodate twenty-five students for five days. He stressed the importance of talking to Aboriginal youth about school and careers when they are young. The goal is to have 500 Aboriginal Registered Forest Professionals in the Province of British Colombia by the year 2020.

At this juncture, Peggy Smith asked all the young Aboriginal foresters in the room to stand and she introduced each of them to the group. She then asked all of the non-Aboriginal foresters working with First Nations to stand and be counted as well.

Darcy Mitchell, Centre for Non-Timber Resources, Royal Roads University

Darcy Mitchell spoke briefly about several approaches to providing graduate level education to professionals. Royal Roads University has established the Centre of Non-Timber Resources, which operates on four pillars: entrepreneurship, leadership, sustainability, and peace and conflict resolution. Royal Roads offers a three-year program for a certificate in non-timber product resources. The Centre recognizes the opportunities to build capacity in communities. Many of the courses and programs offered through the school are available to remote communities, enabling students to not have to leave their communities to study. She added that 70 per cent of the Centre's work done is with First Nations, and that this was a very exciting time in the development of educational opportunities.

Morning Plenary Session

Session Chair: Brian Wilson, Director, Programs Division, Canadian Forest Service, Natural Resources Canada

John Sills, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

John Sills explained that the Northern Boreal Initiative arose from the interest of several First Nations to explore the possibility that northern forestry could be a new economic development initiative for them. The northern boreal forest is an area approximately north of the 51st parallel in the west and the 50th in the east.

The first step in the process was relationship building with eleven different First Nations, he said. The next step was the development of land use strategies. If forestry becomes an economic activity in the area, it will be necessary to come up with appropriate rules that foster orderly sustainable development. The goal is to use community-based landuse planning to strike a balance among protection, conservation, and new development where new and existing interests are respected and coexist.

Mr. Sills explained that the process involved checking for interest and commitment for potential First Nations partners, community consultation, data collection and analysis, and traditional knowledge surveys. Scale in landuse planning is important, because decisions made at the local level must be tied to other scales — landscape and province.

What is working well in this process, he concluded, is that First Nations are taking the lead with the involvement of youth and Elders guiding the processes. Throughout the process, decisions have been consensus-based and strong partnership bonds have been forged.

Alex Peters, Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation

Alex Peters prefaced his remarks by acknowledging that he works for the Elders of his community who are leading the process known as the Whitefeather Forest Initiative. Whitefeather was the name given to the project by the Elders.

Pikangikum First Nation is a community of 2200 people, three-quarters of whom are under 25 years old, Mr. Peters said. The community has been under a third-party agreement with the federal government, which he referred to as an Indian Agent Agreement. The community's school was built in the 1980s for 300 students, and now has 700 students, many of who learn in portables with the windows boarded over to keep out the cold. The youth suicide rate is so high that Pikangikum has been dubbed the national suicide capital. The government promised to hook the community up to the power grid, but the hydro poles remain stacked. Houses in the community lack sewer and water connections.

But the Whitefeather story is a good story, Mr. Peters said, because it is the story of a lot of good, patient people working together for their community. It came about because the Elders acknowledged that it was time to say yes to economic development and resource extraction. The Elders are leading the process and are sharing their knowledge of the land, animals, fish, and birds with western scientists. Even the young people of the community have become involved in mapmaking and other activities.

Andrew Chapeskie, Taiga Institute for Land, Culture and Economy

Andrew Chapeskie reiterated that Pikangikum is an Ojibwa First Nation of 2200 people living on reserve in the northern Ontario boreal forest. The people have traditionally considered the forest and the land treasures to be passed on to their children. Fewer than 50 Band members live off the reserve, he said. They are a tenacious people who cling to their language, land, and culture.

The people of Pikangikum see their relationship to their lands as a trust — a custodial relationship that obliges them to care for the land. They also want their children to have economic renewal, so they decided forestry tenure would be one of the tools they would use.

To accomplish this, they began to speak with their neighbours, the Ontario government, to find ways to work together. The goal is to find "win-win" partnerships. One such involves working with an ornithologist who will learn from traditional knowledge and, in turn, teach ornithology to members of the community. The Elders are also working on research projects with the academic community.

The largest intact forest in the world is in North America, and Pikangikum is right in the middle of it, Mr. Chapeskie concluded. Two-thirds of Canada's land mass is occupied by people speaking Aboriginal languages. This provides a common opportunity of global significance to lead partnerships that will allow for the sustainable use of lands, while protecting indigenous cultures.

Non-Timber Forest Products

Session Chair: Vernon Syrette, FNFP, Ontario Management Committee

Non-Timber Forest Products in Community Economic Diversification

Dr. Darcy Mitchell, Centre for Non-Timber Resources, Royal Roads University

Darcy Mitchell said that non-timber forest products offer opportunities and challenges for First Nations communities in terms of forest management and economic diversification. Non-timber forest products (NTFPs) are all of the botanical and mycological species in the forest, other than timber, pulpwood, shakes, or other wood products. The definition usually also includes associated services, such as tourism and education.

The British Columbia coast has several classifications, including wild edibles, mushrooms, forest greens, berries, and arts and crafts supplies. Medicinals and nutraceuticals are two other important NTFPs, as are ecotourism and wilderness education. Each year, NTFPs contribute $270 million to the British Columbia economy — mostly from wild mushrooms and forest greens. The Canadian Forest Service has estimated that the forests could yield as much as $1 billion in non-timber products annually, especially if maple syrup operations are factored in.

The interest in NTFPs is increasing rapidly, Dr. Mitchell said, because of the following:

- They mesh well with the cultures of small forest-dependent communities;
- They are supportable and sustainable;
- They give small communities a chance to be involved in resource management and the development of ecodiversity; and,
- They are consistent with subsistence, traditional, and new commercial applications.

Non-timber products offer an opportunity for sustainable management of forest ecosystems by creating income streams while timber matures; by providing income and employment for forest workers; and by offering labour force stabilization for young people, women, and Elders, who are not often employed in timber harvesting. Forest management for healthy, diverse NTFPs is compatible with the protection of biodiversity, threatened and endangered species, and environmental enhancement through carbon sequestration and landscape beautification.

Non-timber forest products can also be a valuable resource for communities trying to make the transition from one employment base to another, said Dr. Mitchell. It is easy to enter the sector, little capital is required, and the technologies involved are simple.

However, there are some serious challenges for communities in economic transition, she said. Profit margins are quite low when products are simply harvested and shipped in bulk. It can be difficult to find markets or to stay in touch with distant markets. Moreover, the sector is poorly understood — even by those working within it.

The situation is further complicated by the fact that many communities do not begin to consider diversification until their circumstances are desperate, with low energy, enthusiasm, capital resources, and little tolerance for risk.

Among the most serious challenges to developing NTFPs as a community economic resource are the following:

- The difficulty in finding information about NTFPs;
- The need to balance commercial and non-commercial uses of the land; and,
- Policy gaps in most jurisdictions that result in few incentives for investment in stewardship of the resource.

Dr. Mitchell said experiences over the past seven years on Vancouver Island demonstrated the need for sustained investment to encourage and support emerging industries. There is a real need for a focused, well-organized approach to management and planning, and better training for individuals and organizations in all aspects of NTFP use and management.

The Centre for Non-Timber Resources was established to support, encourage, and help legitimize the sustainable utilization of NTFPs in boreal and temperate forest regions, she explained. Its primary areas of focus include education, training and community capacity building; socio-economic, ecological and policy research; and networking and information development. One of the Centre's future goals is to link with regional centres in British Columbia and with national and international networks in order to support and promote non-timber forestry activities.

Awazibi...A Sweet Success Story

Tony Quedent, Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation

Tony Quedent began his presentation by showing participants the logo for the Awazibi brand of maple syrup, harvested and processed on the Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation. The logo is intended to show that the product is a blend of traditional knowledge with modern technology. Awazibi means "to carry the maple water."

Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation is an Algonquin territory in Quebec. Traditionally, its members depended on logging for employment. About ten years ago, the First Nation decided to preserve its territorial lands so that the forest would have a chance to replenish itself. Since maple trees can be tapped for up to 100 years, it was decided that a maple syrup operation would provide an opportunity to balance the preservation of the forest with economic development opportunities.

In 1998, the maple syrup operations began and have now developed into a 57-hectare stand of mixed growth maple hardwoods with 12,000 taps.

In the construction phase, he said, 15 jobs were created in site and road preparation. During the season, the operation employs four people nearly 24 hours per day, using a blend of tradition and technology, to produce as much as 12,000 litres of syrup annually. The operation uses a state-of-the-art oil-fired rap processing plant, an evaporator and bottling unit that is less labour intensive than traditional approaches.

As demand grows, said Mr. Quedent, new opportunities are presenting themselves in the retail market. Awazibi syrup is graded according to Agriculture Canada's guidelines and is the only federally licenced sugar bush that has an AAA rating from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, which allows it to sell its products anywhere in the world.

Aboriginal Business Canada and INAC provided 50 per cent of the start-up funding for the operation. Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation absorbed the rest of the cost, anticipating that the endeavour would become self-sustaining and would provide enough revenue to recover these initial costs.

In the future, secondary products including maple candies, maple butter, maple sugar, maple jelly, and spreads will be produced and a restaurant will be constructed to serve visitors touring the facility.

Awazibi is an example of how traditional knowledge and modern technology have combined to create a booming business, Mr. Quedent said. The business incorporates traditional ways with good management to create a sustainable, long-term economic venture.

A participant observed that recent research established that there was a real economic advantage in products bearing an Aboriginal premium. Market analysis revealed that people in southern urban specialty markets are willing to pay up to 45 per cent more for products with an Aboriginal brand.

Another participant noted that her community had traditionally gathered fiddleheads, wild mushrooms, Labrador tea, and black ash. However, as soon as a product becomes economically viable, Aboriginal people are pushed out of the market by more commercial interests.

Non-timber resources in Canada are unregulated, a participant observed. At the same time, Aboriginal rights are protected under the Constitution and both levels of government and third parties have a fiduciary responsibility toward Aboriginal peoples, cultures, and traditions. Having the resource unregulated is negatively affecting the use of traditional medicines and foods. At the same time, it is not in the First Nations' interests to have governments impose more regulations on territorial lands.

First Nations Forestry Program Success Stories

Session Chair: Reginald Parsons, FNFP, Canadian Forest Service, Natural Resources Canada

M'TIWA-KI Services

Art Jacko, President, M'TIWA-KI Services

Art Jacko said that the First Nations Forestry Program assisted the M'TIWA-KI Services to offer services to governments and to First Nations. The first thing it did was to create a business plan. Every second year it reworks its business plan. After so many years in business, Mr. Jacko said he wondered when they would pass the threshold of success.

Being involved in natural resources, this business has to be diverse. It also had to make a lot of equipment investments, and had to have a sound accounting system in place. Mr. Jacko said that he has worked with many First Nations in the past, a fact that assisted him in securing contacts. He cautioned business owners to keep their expectations realistic and to focus at first on small and short-term contracts. The advantage of this approach is that the growing pains are manageable because they are small. "We learned the minimum that we had to achieve and what contracts to stay away from," said Mr. Jacko.

Mr. Jacko mentioned some examples of work his business has undertaken:

- Managed a Wikwemikong forest company;
- Provided for fire suppression crews for Northern Ontario;
- Provided fire training;
- Coordinated and managed projects; and,
- Designed the "Hats for Hides" program.

Some of their equipment requirements are forestry equipment, office supplies, training manuals, forest fire equipment, and GPS machines. They buy a lot of their equipment from British Columbia because it is cheaper.

Their funding partners include the First Nations Forestry Program, Aboriginal Business Canada, and Fednor. Each year the company reinvests in itself, something Mr. Jacko called "a driver for success." There is lots of freedom in small business, he said, but there is also a lot of work. Business owners often work seven days a week.

M'TIWA-KI Services grossed $176,000 in its first year of operation. This figure has steadily risen: the company now has annual gross revenue of over $700,000. He cautioned that it is important to keep business finances in order. For instance wages, insurance, and office overhead all must be taken care of to be able to work with other companies. Some other things to consider are liability insurance, worker compensation benefits, training and certification, cost reduction, workplace harassment, and occupational health and safety.

Mr. Jacko said that his business cut its training costs by delivering its own training. He noted that it would help First Nations to secure funds or trade work for training employees.

He said businesses must adapt to a changing environment by monitoring their work environment. For example, they must know the needs of their clients, who their competitors are, the cost of doing business, and their growth potential. The First Nations Forestry Program funding allowed his company to be more competitive, build training expertise, and secure other contracts. He projects that all of their training instructors will be First Nations by 2005.

In 1998, the business started with one full-time and two seasonal workers. Today they have four full-time and 120 seasonal workers. In 2005, Mr. Jacko projects an even larger staff.

Some of the challenges he faces in his business are the rising costs of doing business, and the problems with employee retention. In addition, there is competition with provincial fire crews.

In conclusion, Mr. Jacko said that forming his company was the best move he had ever made.

Rebuilding Secwepemc Capacity – An Exercise in Self-determination

Kristy Palmantier, Williams Lake Indian Band

Kristy Palmantier began with a greeting in her native "old" Shuswap language. To justify her many accomplishments, she said she was told by the Elders who raised her to "keep busy until you die." She in turn has six children, who she likes to keep busy. Ms. Palmantier lives on other side of Calgary. "Our territory is one of largest First Nations territories in province," she said, with 17 First Nations in the territory. It takes 12 hours to travel from her community to the other end of the territory.

In the late 1990s, community leaders identified a need to form an organization to promote communication among the communities and to protect their territory for future generations. This organization promotes sustainable forest management programs and works on environmental protection. Among other things, it promotes employment opportunities for the communities. For example, the organization has one of the four largest salmon runs in world, as well as a huge forest operation.

The First Nations Forestry Program funding has helped them to build various forums for discussion that provide opportunities to share knowledge. It has also enabled them to create a reference manual intended for use by the Chief, Council, natural resource managers, and technicians. A natural resource manager meeting held quarterly is an opportunity to share information and collaborate on natural resource projects. They also have a database of all community resources. There is also an Education Coordinator provided through First Nations Forestry Program funding. The organization is currently developing a Web site. She said last year they had three huge forest fires. It was a scary time, but they were able to use the database to get people out. Currently they are facing a mountain pine beetle epidemic.

Ms. Palmantier concluded her presentation with a few proud words about her community and then showed slides of some of the worldwide indigenous gatherings.

Commenting on the situation created by the huge fires last year, a participant said his Grand Chief made a smart move in approaching the Ministry of Forestry in southern British Columbia to salvage the burned wood. The conditions were tough to operate in. He admitted that although the fire was devastating, it will provide an economic advantage to some First Nations communities in the area.

Another audience member asked Art Jacko about negotiating the contracts. He responded that they hadn't entertained anything in that area yet but they were starting to make a breakthrough.

Emerging Forestry Concepts

Session Chair: Lorne West, FNFP, Canadian Forest Service, Natural Resources Canada

Sustaining Nitassinan: Ecosystem-Based Planning in Labrador and the Innu Nation Forest Guardians

Valerie Courtois, Innu Nation

Valerie Courtois began her presentation of "Sustaining Nitassinan: Ecosystem-based Forest Planning in Labrador" with a brief overview of the geography of Labrador, which is home to one of the largest intact boreal regions in Canada. This area has been home to the Innu for thousands of years. As forest sources in the south dwindle and new technologies are developed, the forests of Nitassinan (Labrador) are becoming more attractive to developers. The "Forest Process Agreement" existed from 2001–2003. This was an ecosystem-based forest management plan that included protection guidelines. There is now the Interim Forest Agreement (2003 – 2008), which is managed by a forest management committee and includes an Innu allocation. Ms. Courtois used a quote from an Innu Elder to illustrate their perspective in planning: "Everything depends on everything...this is the best science I can give you." The approach is to manage human actions, not the ecosystem, and to focus on what to leave instead of what to take.

Ms. Courtois elaborated on ecosystem-based management. The goals are to protect the forest function and sustain a diversity of human and non-human interests. The three main values are prioritized in descending order: ecological responsibility, cultural responsibility, and economic responsibility. Planning themes follow these three values. The Landscape Level, the Watershed Level, and the Stand Level are considered in the planning process. The cultural landscape is included in the planning process as well, which serves to integrate local knowledge into any management forest plan. Data has been integrated into GIS to enable planners to develop maps and visualizations in the planning process. This facilitates understanding of the outcomes of various forest management options on land use, wildlife, and other values.

For the Interim Forest Agreement, the Innu nation and the province are working together to identify sustainable economic opportunities for Labrador forest products. The Innu nation has developed a forest guardian program to train community technicians to monitor forest activities. All the guardians receive training from Elders and professors. They inform the community about forestry issues, conduct pre-operative surveys to identify ecologically sensitive sites, and build relationships with the Newfoundland and Labrador Forest Service staff and timber contractors. This program, along with the integration of traditional knowledge into the planning process, results in meaningful participation of the Innu community in management planning and protection of the forest.

The Emerging Influence of Resilience Thinking on Forest Management

Ed Mandamin, Iskatewizaagegan No. 39 Independent First Nation

Ed Mandamin identified himself as a member of the Pelican Clan. After walking through a forest one day on the "Rez" (Shoal Lake No.39) he had a revelation. A spirit spoke with him and asked him to stay with the community. Elders gave him his Indian name, "Supreme Leader," and he was appointed a vision holder in his community.

In 1999, a cultural landscape study was done in partnership with the University of Manitoba. Information was gathered in many ways, including analysing soil samples and talking with the Elders of the community. Maps and trails were documented; incorporating them into the Trans-Canada trail to Kenora is a possibility. The results of this study were presented to the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. One of the ways the Elders participated in the study was through a sharing circle, where training was passed along. It is the vision of the Elders to establish an institution of learning in Shoal Lake No. 39 that combines western and traditional knowledge.

In partnership with the University of Manitoba, the community is now involved in forest management. When the research was first presented to the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, it was amazed at the comprehensive data that had been collected. In the context of this work, Mr. Mandamin said he asked that the Elders be addressed as "professors," as that is what they are. That respect must be demanded from the Ministry. This study has proven that knowledge comes from the land, not from a university. "Our tech school was on the ground," he said.

The Emerging Influence of Resilience Thinking on Forest Management

Iain Davidson-Hunt, University of Manitoba

Iain Davidson-Hunt introduced his topic as "Resilience and Adaptive Learning," following upon the work that Mr. Mandamin had presented before him. He stated that the work he was doing in partnership with Shoal Lake No.39 has involved many people since the mid-1990s. Many different kinds of knowledge have been shared, from hunting to maple syrup harvesting. From a university perspective, this has been a very productive project.

Introducing the theme of resilience, Mr. Davidson-Hunt stated that within an ecosystem paradigm, resilience refers to the stability of an ecosystem and the time it takes to return to a particular state after a disturbance. Social Ecology Resilience acknowledges self-determination and adaptive learning and the perspective that what might be "science for the west" is a "myth for the rest."

He concluded by stressing the importance of including people in the planning paradigm, and the importance of people being able to make their own decisions in their own environments. Thinking in terms of resilience helps to maintain linkages between the people who live and use the land.

Policy and Law Concerning Forest Carbon

Stewart Elgie, University of Ottawa

Stewart Elgie provided a brief overview of the policy and law concerning forest carbon in the context of the Kyoto Accord. Under the Kyoto Accord, the carbon stored in the forest (in the trees) will have economic value. Mr. Elgie suggested that First Nations should factor this potential into their land and forest planning. The Little Red River First Nation has already incorporated forest and carbon trading potential into its forest management plan.

In order for Canadian industries to reduce emissions by 55 million units, trading for forest carbon credits will be necessary. However, a number of issues remain unresolved, the most pressing being title to the credits as provinces, licensees, and First Nations may all have legitimate claim. Canada must also decide whether to count carbon credits from managed forests.

Carbon trading as an economic opportunity is still difficult to measure as this is a new area of research. However, there is no question that it will be of value considering the necessity of reducing emissions. No one yet knows the cost and profits associated with carbon trading. In conclusion, Mr. Elgie stressed the need for First Nations to provide input into the process of setting the rules governing forests and carbon trading.

Forest Business Development

Session Chair: Gordon Iron, FNFP, Saskatchewan Management Committee

Lenny Joe, Grizzly-Man Resource Management Ltd.

Lenny Joe, from Merritt, British Columbia, is a university graduate, a professional forester, and an entrepreneur owning several companies. Working 14 to 17 hours a day, the first year he saved over $50,000 from the $110,000 he made to develop his own company, buying private cuts and with the harvested wood began a log home construction business. The company built seven, 3000 sq. ft. log homes for a ski resort in Colorado, and 1400 sq. ft. homes in Nebraska.

In 2002, Mr. Joe joined Aboriginal Assessment Limited. He was asked by the company to apply for a timber sale licence, and was given a 70,000 cubic metre cut. This private cut continues to provide wood to build log homes.

Mr. Joe described an entrepreneur as someone who is a calculated risk-taker who works hard and is outgoing. Opportunities are out there, he said, regardless of where one lives in Canada, but it takes someone special to look at that opportunity and make a vision of it. A person has to "build outward" — go to school, get a degree, have a vision. Then, with a lot of hard work (and family support) that person can become a successful entrepreneur, he told participants.

Mr. Joe suggested putting everything about partnerships in writing. Flexibility is also an important factor. Knock on doors. Keep track of expenses and have an idea what is spent everyday. He emphasized the main objective of an entrepreneur was "to do what you want to do."

It is important for him to be a role model and help others in his community, said Mr. Joe, reiterating the importance of an education. He recalled that before he began work, there were many consultants — described as experts — who lived more than two hours away from the reserve. Watching them, he decided he could do what they did.

In conclusion, Mr. Joe said that in five years he expects to have key workers in place. In 10 years he expects to have a successful business with key workers in place and in 15 years, he hopes to retire.

Levi Southwind, Tupnikaning Enterprises

Levi Southwind from the Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nation, on the north shore of Lake Huron, one hour east of Sudbury, Ontario, has over 25 years of experience in logging and wood sales. He overcame his demons, and with determination and hard work became an entrepreneur.

In looking at economic development for First Nations, Mr. Southwind said communities have to consider where they are as individuals. As well as their relationships within the community, relationships with the outside world must also be considered, because it has an influence on what has to be done. The culture of First Nation people is very important in helping to define capitalism in the community. "When we pursue the 'rich get richer' theory in our community, they pull away; we have to overcome that effect," he said. Development of an individual and the development of families go hand and hand.

Mr. Southwind described the development of his own company and the basic things that guided him. His grandfather emphasized the importance of going to school and getting an education. At a young age, he was removed from his community and sent to Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, where he finished his Grade 12 with honours. This was during the late 1960s and no one would give him a job. During summer vacation, Mr. Southwind worked on farms and enjoyed the work, but he noticed that farmers did not know much about business management. He therefore took the opportunity to take agriculture courses majoring in business subjects.

It is important for First Nations people look at themselves, said Mr. Southwind. The decision to change has to come from within as well as come from the community. In order to develop, one has to know where he or she is going, and one cannot forget community roots.

The skills of running a skidder or sharpening a saw were unknown to Mr. Southwind, but he soon learned them. He can now cut and skid a trailer load a day. Today he has a small, 28 cubic metre licence over five years.

To make ends meet, Mr. Southwind emphasized the importance of making and sticking to a business plan. Know how to negotiate stumpage fees. Go to Aboriginal Business Canada with a plan and a Statement of Intent. However, he warned participants, "the process takes a long time."

Peter Jones, Aboriginal Business Canada

Peter Jones has noticed that in the three and a half years since he joined Aboriginal Business Canada (ABC) there has been a double volume increase in the number of business developments for Aboriginal people in the forest sector. However, he pointed out that the media loves to hear and report negative stories, while successful and positive stories of Aboriginal business accomplishments rarely make the news. A study done over three years showed a 50% survival rate in Aboriginal businesses after five years. A 67% survival rate resulted when a little bit of equity was put up front. Mr. Jones pointed out when one puts personal financial investment into a business, that person is more likely to work harder to get his or her equity back and make a profit.

An increasing number of Aboriginal people want to run and manage their own businesses, said Mr. Jones, advising anyone interested to put together a good business plan with some elasticity.

ABC works with the National Aboriginal Economic Development Board and many other government departments and agencies. It has a large network of offices available across the country from Yellowknife, Thunder Bay, Regina, and London to assist First Nations status treaty people and those of Métis and Inuit heritage.

Since 1989, ABC has had 8,500 clients for a total investment of over $1.8 billion in the Aboriginal private sector. Successful applicants from 18 to 35 years of age are provided with assistance to start, acquire, and expand a business, be it in forestry, retail, or technical services.

Mr. Jones also said that individuals are allowed up to $75,000 to start, while up to $500,000 may be allotted to community-based projects.

In business innovation, ABC helps companies advance to a new realm. Mr. Jones advised any business that wants to be more profitable to look into technology. ABC can also assist through marketing expansion, finding new markets to sell products.

Applicants need only to go to the ABC office in their area to fill in an application form, along with a Statement of Intent. The office will assist in sending the applicant to the right person or the right government department.

Bioenergy

Session Chairs: Timothy Cant, Consultant, Whitehorse, Yukon Territory and Dan Cresswell, FNFP, Yukon Management Committee

Application of Renewable Energy to District Heating Systems

Chris Snoek, Natural Resources Canada

Chris Snoek explained how community energy systems and community energy planning work. A central plant makes hot water, which is pumped to different buildings for heat and domestic hot water use. The cooled water is then returned to the plant to be heated again.

District energy approaches are not new, said Mr. Snoek. They date back as far as Roman times and are currently used by many countries in Europe, whose climates are similar to much of Canada's, including Finland, Denmark, Sweden, and Germany. In countries like Finland and Denmark that lack indigenous high-efficiency energy sources, such as oil and natural gas, district energy generation allows them to reduce their dependence on expensive, and sometimes unreliable, supplies of foreign oil.

Traditional central power systems, such as large thermal power plants, hydroelectric plants or nuclear generators, simultaneously produce heat energy and electrical or mechanical power. However, in the process of transmitting electricity to the remote customer, nearly 75 per cent of the energy is lost in the form of heat dissipated into rivers, lakes, or the air.

If heat and power are combined there is less energy efficiency, but it is possible to use the heat energy as well, Mr. Snoek explained. This technique lends itself well to distributed energy generation, which is ideal

for smaller facilities serving one industry or community. It is ideal for cogeneration for other purposes, such as heating or cooling. In addition, district energy generators are small, flexible, and modular and can be installed quickly with negligible transmission or distribution costs because the power is used locally.

Biomass is also an ideal fuel for co-generation in district energy systems, said Mr. Snoek. Biomass is biological matter that can be burned for energy and includes wood chips, bark, sawdust, clean municipal solid waste, landfill gas, trimmings, clean construction lumber, straw, flax, switchgrass, and other cellulose matter. Biomass combustion is a good alternative in places where electricity is very expensive or the biomass is available for little or not cost.

Rather than taking what we need from the forest and leaving the rest, Mr. Snoek suggested using the rest for other purposes such as community energy generation. Canada has an abundant supply of renewable energy. Community energy systems are right for Canada. Good community energy planning can achieve energy efficiency, conservation, CO^2 reductions, economic, social and environmental benefits, and new business opportunities.

Biomass-based District Heating System

Carl Chaboyer, Grassy Narrows First Nation

Carl Chaboyer explained that Grassy Narrows has had a biomass-based district heating system for several years. The system has three components: a central heating plant, a distribution network, and customer buildings. He explained that the technical details of district heating systems are well established. The Grassy Narrows plant heats water to 85°C, and distributes it through a set of plastic underground pipes to customer buildings. The pipes are cheaper than steel piping and advantageous for remote communities because local people can repair them.

The building heating systems tend to use either radiators or forced air systems, he said. Ideally, consumers would install sub-floor radiant heating systems, but they tend to be prohibitively expensive. Instead, the focus has been to convert the heating systems already there.

Various problems were encountered in the commissioning of the system — mostly related to organizational issues, Mr. Chaboyer said. People were separately and independently designing the energy transfer systems, the distribution network, and the heating plant without adequate clear communication. As a result, some design elements did not mesh well with others. There was also not enough contingency built into the project, not just in terms of money, but also of human resources needed to help work things out for the community.

A large part of the problem is that this was an outside system imported to a First Nations community. What now exists, he said, is a system that has been adapted to fit the community's needs and takes into consideration the community's work patterns.

In designing the system, the engineers assumed there would be an unlimited supply of low cost wood to supply it, since the community is surrounded by forest. This was not the case. An engineer's inclination when wood supply is low might be to take a chipper truck to the forest and cut down trees. But the Elders constantly remind the community that every tree is sacred and many in the community would rather go cold than cut trees.

The fuel the plant uses comes from three mills in the Kenora area, and is considered a waste product, said Mr. Chaboyer. Since the community is a small customer, it is often shunted aside for larger, easier customers — especially when gas prices get high and other large mills turn to biomass for generation. There are also difficulties in operating a district heating system in the summer because there is no need for heat, so developing other uses is important.

Mr. Chaboyer noted that there are models available from NRCan that help calculate if biomass heating is an option for a particular group. He encouraged careful consideration to ensure that, whatever option is chosen, it is the appropriate one for a particular community.

Bioeconomy, the Forestry Sector and Communities

Luc Duchesne, DynaMotive Energy Systems Corporation

Luc Duchesne explained that his job is to find communities where there is biomass, take it, dry it, convert it to bio-oil and sell it as a replacement for other fuels. The types of biomass that can be converted include corn stalks, sewage sludge, and agricultural and forestry by-products, all of which are low-value waste products whose use is consistent with forest conservation approaches.

Bioenergy is critical for northern and remote communities, Mr. Duchesne said, because it allows for adequate power generation, economic autonomy, and social sustainability while being renewable. However, to be a viable solution it must be cost-competitive with fossil fuels, which it is not in its raw form. This is due to its mass and the expense of transporting the biomass to the generation sites. A cord of wood contains 25 gigajoules of energy — enough to run a car for a year. The problem arises in converting that wood into a form that can be used by a car or other power generators.

BioOil is a clean-burning CO2-neutral fuel that is non-polluting and Kyoto-creditable, easily transportable and storable. It is made using a process called "fast pyrolysis" that rapidly heats biomass in the absence of oxygen, creating a yield of 55 to 70 per cent BioOil and 15 to 25 per cent charcoal. The cost of BioOil-generated energy is $4 to $4.50 per gigajoule, roughly half the cost of fossil fuels.

DynaMotive, the company that developed the BioOil technology, has designed a modular plant that is tooled to process 10 tons of biomass daily. Mr. Duchesne said that a larger plant with a 100-ton capacity is in development. The BioOil produced is easily stored and transported.

At present, BioOil is being used as an industrial fuel for boilers, kilns and furnaces, and district heating systems. Further down the road, DynaMotive hopes to set up a power generation plant that will produce BioOil, then burn it to generate heat and electricity. Transportation use options are also being explored.

This technology has tremendous potential for communities where energy is hard to import or expensive, but there is available biomass, he concluded. It fits perfectly with district distribution systems, and will be ideally suited to the economic, social, and cultural requirements of many First Nations communities. At its current stage of development, it would cost $6.5 to $9 million to set up a plant that can convert 100 tons of biomass daily, but the technology and applications are being rapidly improved and developed.

Non Traditional Business Models — How To Do Business Under the Indian Act

Session Chair: Lorraine Rekmans, National Aboriginal Forestry Association

Chief John Beaucage, Wasauksing First Nation

Chief John Beaucage, the first speaker on the panel, warned that given his experiences, much of what he had to say was negative. He talked about the litigation the Wasauksing First Nation faced in an attempt to regain control of one of its resources. Due to a history of problems, it was imperative that a path of accountability be created.

The conflict began when the First Nation wanted to develop a portion of its prime land for cottage leasing. It developed 244 cottage lots, which amounted to $73,000,000. The Indian Act prevented the First Nation from dealing directly with its own land so it established a committee that was accountable to the community. The Crown solution was to incorporate the non-profit organization. During a series of community meetings it was understood that the corporation would have control over this project. The community was told that the corporation belonged to everyone. Letters patent reflected this. Things went well with the venture from 1971 to 1994 until a new Chief and Council took over the operation and ultimately exploited it. No revenues flowed as they had in previous years. However, the lease amount increased from $250,000 to $3 million.

The original committee tried to restore accountability for the operation through the Supreme Court. The Court decided against the First Nation, based on the principle that these types of problems could not be resolved by an order or court of law. Rather, they had to be resolved in the political realm. The trial judge concluded that members of the First Nation were not corporate members because they did not vote at the meetings. Contrary to overwhelming evidence, the trial judge ruled that Aboriginal people had no traditional right to incorporate. The Judge decided that because the First Nation had chosen to incorporate, it had to live within the regulatory framework of corporation. The First Nation argued that it had the right to have say over its own land, but the Superior Court of Justice asserted that there was no such practice relating to corporations.

Mr. Beaucage said that because the courts have found that First Nations do not have the inherent right to incorporate, they have to be careful in structuring the corporation. They must ensure that communities have full input and membership into the corporation. It only takes 10% to vote out board of directors. He stressed that all community members have to be members. Mr. Beaucage said it is important for Aboriginal communities who become involved in economic ventures to be accountable to the total community.

The Government of Canada tries to protect the *Business Corporations Act* because big corporations want certainty. He concluded his presentation saying that his First Nation will make sure to have full accountability in its new wind power project!

A participant said that he had a similar experience in his community in that there were common shares issued to community members for a business venture. He hoped that the whole community would benefit and that it would not encounter the same problems. He said that as Chief of the community, he was trying to deal with a range of issues. "It is hard to know the *Business Corporations Act*, but we must," he concluded.

Henry Wetelainen, Ontario Métis Aboriginal Association

Henry Wetelainen talked about the conflict of being the president of a non-profit corporation and a local politician. The government told him that he could not be both. Wetelainen always had trouble with the model of corporations. First Nations have to be careful and learn through their mistakes. They had a similar situation to the one described earlier by John Beaucage. It took them two and a half years to regain the corporation. He emphasized the need to take time to understand structure and cautioned the politicians not to give up political control.

Mr. Wetelainen described various economic and development ventures that he was involved in. He said that even the failures were good because they were opportunities to learn. He talked about the structure of his family-owned woodlots and tourism camp on the same lake. He wanted to share it with his family, so he sold it to his father who is a status Indian to protect it from taxation. As a Métis person, he believes tax exemption is a right.

Mr. Wetelainen talked about how he overcame some of the challenges in trying to undertake logging with Bowater. He advised participants to use what they have as negotiating leverage and stressed the importance of training the workforce. He also talked about how his business retains good workers who will stay on. He concluded saying "You need to push hard on the issues and don't let anything get away from you."

A PhD candidate in the audience said that she was impressed to hear the presentations, and commented that perhaps First Nations will have to change the mindset that incorporation is the best way to do business. John Beaucage welcomed her comments and said that she was right. He noted that First Nations only gained right to vote in the early 1960s. "We were seen as something less, thus Corporate Canada has not evolved to look after the way we do things," he said. First Nations conduct a lot of business through consensus and accept advice from their Elders. He concluded that First Nations would have to adapt the corporation to suit their business needs.

An Elder talked about his experiences as an Aboriginal person and the parallels that he saw between his people and cooped-up zoo animals. As long as First Nations people are on welfare, they are a

commodity for the government because there are more jobs for other people. He then talked about the disconnection between corporate thinking and that of First Nations people.

Another participant talked about the struggles he saw in many communities from the perspective of his position as president of several corporate entities. He said "Our people have been forced into incorporation to be recognized." He looked at ways people could gain capacity to deal with businesses without incorporating. He talked about having to register his sole proprietorship business because the Ministry of Natural Resources had to register with a legal entity. "We have to look at our principles and values, and think outside the box so we can meet our needs," he said. "We need to build our own house rather than try to fit into someone else's."

Another audience member asked if the cooperative model was gaining more interest in the business world. The Chair responded that currently there was no change in the curriculum to reflect that interest. Thus, business students would not know of the alternatives, a situation that is a disservice to First Nations communities.

Using New Technology in Forest Management Planning

Session Chair: Timothy Cant, Consultant, Whitehorse, Yukon Territory

Moving TEK off the MAP: Applying New Technologies to Preserve and Promote Traditional Ecosystem Knowledge

David Mackett, Lake Superior First Nations Development Trust

David Mackett is currently working with five First Nations in Ontario. Together they are working with community Elders to protect the forest by collecting and protecting traditional ecological knowledge (TEK). Using GIS technology makes it possible to compile this information and create maps that represent comprehensive layers of information about the community and territory. The project teams (Elders, Mr. Mackett, and community members) identify the diverse values of the community, and then, with the additional information provided by GIS, are able to determine what underlies these values, creating a deeper understanding of the land and the people who live on the land. Before coming to the conference, he asked the permission of all of the First Nations he works with to share some of the process with the conference delegates.

"TEK meets TECH," was how Mr. Mackett described the projects that use GIS. This sort of data collection is "not just about geography and science." Instead, using GIS technology in this process makes it possible to include traditional values, in both past and present applications. The most important step is to establish trust and respect, and to establish a flexible data collection method for collecting TEK in diverse First Nations. Knowledge of the land, water, forests, and all of the creatures that live in these environments has been passed on between generations through oral teachings, spirituality, and ceremony. The current focus of these projects is a combination of GIS mapping, data collection methods, and Internet mapping server technology to develop a guide. The communities develop the questions and create a value-coding table that assigns different codes for different categories. In the past, the Ministry of Natural Resources has told First Nations communities what values to collect.

All of the data collected creates different levels for the maps made using GIS. It is possible to explore many different levels of information in these maps. For example, they can also be made interactive using video and audio clips to explain original names, introduce Elders, and promote certain aspects of the community. All of the decisions about what to collect and include are made by the community.

Using TEK and technology together facilitates capacity building, as chief and council appoint the community worker who collects the data; that person then receives GIS training. Mr. Mackett suggested that there are opportunities to build infrastructure and help with different sorts of management using the information collected.

The Development Trust projects are able, through the collection of TEK, to demonstrate the application of values on a map. Some of these maps show that the traplines and canoe routes of First Nations used to overlap before treaties were signed and roads and borders were created. Mapping is only one phase of the collection process: the use of Internet server technologies along with GIS and selected data is being explored to promote tourism in some communities. GIS has helped communities save areas from cutting, and helped one community build a healing lodge by mapping a road.

A key element of the data collection process is remaining adaptable to the needs of the community. The information collected can help with land claims, preserve traplines, and create a database of culturally sensitive values for the community's use.

First Nations have many opportunities to use GIS to map their territories in comprehensive geographic and cultural detail, depending on the information collected by the community.

Use of Visual GIS in Forest Management

Tomislav Sapic, Lakehead University

Tomislav Sapic from Lakehead University began his presentation with a general overview of GIS, described as computer-based systems used to store, manipulate, and display geographic information. Visual GIS in its current state is a computer-based three-dimensional display model that can use real images to depict geographic areas. The system uses data to render displays and maps using real images; these maps can be altered with new data entered into a GIS system and then viewed via Visual GIS.

Aboriginal peoples have traditionally lived off the land and have had intimate and detailed knowledge of the land features. Maps have been stored in the memories of the land users, and the information about the land has been passed on between people and generations orally. Since Aboriginal peoples have traditionally relied upon the land for their subsistence and spiritual and cultural life, the information has to contain all relevant spatial details, landscape shapes, presence and types of vegetation, presence of animals, and places of cultural and spiritual significance.

Two of the major modern map applications are traditional land use and occupancy studies (TLUOS) and map depictions of Aboriginal values. GIS capacities within Aboriginal communities have been developed as a response to new technological advances in mapping and as a support to TLUOS for Aboriginal values projects. GIS can serve many purposes in this context, as the data sets can be used to support land claims; manage, plan, and develop land; and build and update a community's spatial repository. The data can be used to identify industry's resource development infractions on Aboriginal rights and title in an effective and timely manner.

Mr. Sapic showed the delegates examples of how real images can be used with Visual GIS to make "cartographic visualizations." It creates detailed landscape visualization, simulating future conditions of cutting, reforestation, and harvesting, and making them more "life-like." He cautioned that real images can sometimes look hyper-real and that it is important to remember that nature cannot be replicated by a computer. Visual GIS "can make forestry plans easier to understand." It is currently being used in British Colombia for forest management as part of the required visual map assessment process for sensitive areas of the forest.

Visual GIS is created out of forestry inventory and standard topographic datasets that do not capture many landscape features that are part of Aboriginal perception of the land. However, Visual GIS presents a great opportunity for Aboriginal people to express their visions and views in culturally appropriate ways. Visual GIS does require expensive software and hardware, and training to operate, which may be too much overhead for a single community.

Mr. Sapic concluded his presentation by stating the importance of using Aboriginal place names with GIS mapping depiction when the technology becomes receptive for labelling.

Aboriginal — Industry Partnerships

Session Chair: Sandra Cardinal, FNFP, Alberta Management Committee

Tembec's Vision of Setting Goals, Working Together, Achieving Results

Norm Young, Tembec Inc.

The partnership of Tembec Inc. with First Nations had a great number of roadblocks in its initial stages. With the rapid expansion of Tembec Inc., Frank Dottori, President and CEO, felt that it was "a recipe for disaster" to have First Nations on the outside looking in. However, it was difficult to get all divisions of Tembec involved with First Nations. It had never been done before, so there was no blueprint to follow.

In his tenure with Tembec, Norm Young, Aboriginal Affairs, Temiskaming, Quebec, found that the company had little communication with First Nations people. However, the situation has changed throughout the years as the company addressed outstanding issues.

The partnership of Tembec with First Nations is a complex one, said Mr. Young. One party cannot benefit at the expense of another — both must be equal partners. Respect, openness, trust, and understanding are important factors. With a united force, everything is possible.

In order to build a working relationship with First Nations, Tembec established a policy for First Nations involvement, and reviewed the role of Aboriginal people as stakeholders. Tembec's role was then one of having an open door strategy, available to advise, with complete visibility within First Nation's communities. Putting trust in the Aboriginal workforce, Tembec looked to the youth. The company provided employment opportunities for students, bursaries, and sponsored career fairs. Sixty per cent of Aboriginal people are under the age of 25. It is estimated that within ten years, one-third of Canada's land mass will be under the control of Aboriginal people.

Mr. Young said that it is important to liaise with First Nations in their front yards, not in their backyards, in order to have a successful collaboration.

Chipping Services Project

Francis Seamont, Tembec Inc.

Two years ago, an idea for a chipping services project was born and Tembec and Listuguj Mi'gmaq Government (LMG) signed an agreement. It joined two partners — one that had something to offer, and the other that needed something done.

A retail business between the two was established and an old chipper was obtained and put into service. Many thought it was another recipe for First Nations to fail, as they had no experience or knowledge of the business transactions. However, before the partnership could be developed a feasibility study and business plan were written. As well, the group put together funding and finances without any government assistance.

Once they decided what equipment was needed, the project began in November 2003. Eight employees were hired for the start-up phase and in a short time the project met and exceeded all expectations and production targets. It soon became self-supporting and profitable. LMG was able to charge a fee to transfer wood into chips.

Today with brand new equipment, it is a "Cadillac investment," said Francis Seamont. In a humorous summation, he emphasized that LMG was an example of what was realized with "injun"uity of the Mi'gmaq people. The company was designed, built, installed, and managed using the latest "injun"eering technology available to the Algonquin and Mi'gmaq Nations.

Luncheon Address

Implementation of the National Forest Strategy

Jean Cinq-Mars, Chairman, National Forest Strategy Coalition

Jean Cinq-Mars presented an overview of the National Forest Strategy, noting that it concerns all conference participants, many of who were involved in its development.

Canada's national forests are a national and international treasure, he said. They also bring with them a major responsibility to conserve and protect that treasure. Canada possesses ten per cent of the world's forests. As a result, Canada had to commit to Agenda 21 for Forest Management.

Canadian forests cover 45 per cent of the nation's landmass for a total of 417 million hectares of forest. Traditionally, Mr. Cinq-Mars said, the forest has been used for wood, pulp and paper, and as a provider of wildlife. More and more, people are recognizing that the forest provides all kinds of services and goods, including carbon storage. As a result, it is increasingly apparent that forest conservation and management is a necessary part of protecting our communities and quality of life.

This poses several challenges. The forest is spread across Canada, but its management and the policies affecting it are decentralized. While there is only one boreal forest, there are many provinces administering it. The National Forest Strategy will allow a combination of diverse perspectives and contributions that will help form a cohesive and consistent approach to conserving Canada's great treasure.

The first forest strategy, developed in 1981, focused on access to wood fibre. Over the years, it has evolved and changed in many ways. The last strategy was adopted in 2003, after broad consultations and meetings across the country. It is a wide-ranging, broadly-based sustainable development strategy that applies to the whole forest sector. The vision for the current strategy was developed in 1998:

The long-term health of Canada's forest will be maintained and enhanced, for the benefit of all living things, and for the social, cultural, environmental, and economic well being of all Canadians now and in the future.

The National Forest Strategy, Mr. Cinq-Mars said, is focused on the following broad themes:

- Ecosystem-based Management
- Sustainable Forest Communities
- Rights and Participation of Aboriginal Peoples
- Forest Products Benefits
- Knowledge and Innovation for Competitiveness and Sustainability
- The Urban Forest and Public Engagement in Sustainability
- Private Woodlots' Contribution to Sustainability
- Reporting and Accountability

The National Forestry Coalition includes almost all forestry associations, education faculties, NRCan, NGOs, Aboriginal groups, and concerned individuals. The coalition currently contains 55 members, he said, and is increasingly engaging people from all across the country in order to represent the aspirations of all Canadians.

Mr. Cinq-Mars explained that the Strategy's third objective focuses on Aboriginal people. It requires the "accommodation of Aboriginal and treaty rights in the sustainable use of the forest recognizing the historical and legal position of Aboriginal Peoples and their fundamental connection to ecosystems."

This objective includes seven specific action items:

3.1 Initiate processes with Aboriginal Peoples and appropriate levels of government for establishing:

- a shared and grounded understanding of Aboriginal rights, Aboriginal title, and treaty rights;
- the roles and responsibilities of Aboriginal Peoples, governments, and forest stakeholders; and,
- measures to fulfill governmental fiduciary responsibilities and the legal duty to consult.

3.2 Implement institutional arrangements between Aboriginal Peoples and governments that reflect a spirit of sharing responsibilities and benefits for the management, conservation and sustainable use of forest lands and resources; and give effect to land claim settlements, treaties and formal agreements on forest resource use and management.

3.3 Incorporate traditional knowledge in managing forest lands and resources in accordance with the Convention on Biological Diversity.

3.4 Direct federal and other available funding to support Aboriginal capacity building and participation in implementing the National Forest Strategy, through measures such as a renewed and expanded First Nation Forestry Program and the development of a parallel Métis forestry program, and in supporting Aboriginal participation in related local, regional and international meetings.

3.5 Provide for access to a fair share of benefits from the use of forest lands and resources.

3.6 Provide for Aboriginal interests in the development of international trade agreements.

3.7 Review and update the status of forest inventories and management plans of Indian Reserve forest areas and identify resources to implement these plans.

Mr. Cinq-Mars encouraged participants to visit the Coalition's Web site at www.nfsc.forest.ca to view the entire strategy, its rationale, and its detailed action items.

He noted that the former strategy had not been very "hands-on." As a result, the current strategy includes indicators and measures for all four of the general objectives and each of the actions. In order to achieve an active, involved coalition, there is a small support secretariat from NRCan and a steering committee composed of three government and three non-governmental representatives. In addition, there is an evaluation and communications committee.

This is a challenging exercise, concluded Mr. Cinq-Mars. So far, it has been successful in composing a strategy, forming a coalition, and developing a team that is ready to implement and evaluate it. However, there is still a need for more support, particularly from people willing to become involved in thematic teams looking at ecosystem management, community impact and other specific issues. He encouraged participants to become involved in the monitoring and implementation of the Strategy by contacting the Secretariat in Ottawa.

Afternoon Plenary Session

Session Chair: Harry Bombay, National Aboriginal Forestry Association

Nishnawbe Aski Nation Perspective

Grand Chief Stan Beardy, Nishnawbe Aski Nation

The Nishnawbe Aski territory covers forty-nine First Nations, and includes fifty communities. Most are fly-in, and the territory landmass covers two-thirds of Ontario. There are three language groups: Ojibwa, Ojicree, and Cree.

The only official link with Canada — the only document that has been signed by the Nishnawbe Aski — is Treaty 9. Signed in 1905, with adhesions in 1929–30, the Treaty agrees to three things: peaceful coexistence with the settlers, a share of natural resources, and a share of the benefits of wealth creation. "This is our problem today. None of the benefits are coming back to our communities," he said. In the past, the Nishnawbe Aski lived off the land, on the land, with the animals, birds, and fish. Even today, many of the people are still using the natural resources and resources from the land, and are still following traditional lifestyles. Recently, forestry has been undertaken in the traditional territory.

The activities of the forestry operation have infringed on Aboriginal treaty rights, which has caused loss of traditional lifestyles with little or no compensation. There has been little or no sharing of timber resources although the treaty specifies otherwise. "Our people get some jobs at minimum wage — some contracts to cut trees and cart them to sawmills. At the present time, the leadership still must fight for the protection of our Aboriginal treaty rights, and must still argue about rights at treaty level and take all of the opportunities to secure what was promised to us," stated the Grand Chief. He added that his leadership is seeking compensation for the loss of traditional lifestyles such as trapping, fishing, and tourism opportunities. They are also demanding that there be meaningful consultation with the communities. The chiefs have adopted a consultation handbook that has been developed to reflect the case law from across Canada for dealing with third-party interests. The Ontario government has rejected it, but the community continues to attempt to collect and map landuse and traditional cultures.

The Nishnawbe Aski would like to see, in terms of forestry, a focus on three main areas: economic spin-offs, revenue/royalty sharing of the estimated $15 billion made by the forestry industry in the territory, and meaningful employment for the communities.

In order for the future to bring prosperity for the people of Nishnawbe Aski (and especially for the youth), natural resources need to be developed sustainably. This has to go beyond timber harvesting and hauling silviculture, which will never create a sustainable ecosystem base. The community must be involved in producing the final products, and participating in strategic positioning to develop new value-added products. The Nishnawbe Aski has been in its territory for thousands of years; traditional knowledge must be respected. He added, "If we become effective partners, we are all winners."

Summary Remarks

Mr. Bombay invited Mr. Gordon Prest up to call the witnesses selected on the first day of the conference in the Witnessing ceremony. Mr. Prest informed the delegates that the witnessing ceremony is a traditional practice of the Sto:lo First Nation on the West Coast. Witnesses are designated to monitor what is said, heard, and seen — they are the recorders of what happens. He identified the designated witnesses and called the first witness to present her observation.

The first witness introduced herself and stated that she felt honoured to have been selected. She said that this was the first time she had attended a forestry conference and saw many possibilities for employment for First Nations peoples. "There is a lot of diversity in age, regions, and thinking," she said. "People came together to partner." Patience and honesty across geographical differences made it possible for everyone to learn from each other. She told the delegates that she saw many possibilities for human resource development when looking at the prospects of the forest industry. First Nations need to pursue Canadian business training to take advantage of these opportunities. She concluded by thanking everyone for making her feel comfortable and welcome.

The second witness thanked the delegates and stated that he was both pleased and honoured to have been selected as a witness. He began his reportage by telling those gathered that he has been a registered forester for over 30 years, most of this time working in Northern Ontario. He said that during the conference he heard several references to "multi-nationals." As an employee of a publicly-traded multi-national, he could attest that these companies create good jobs and opportunities in the Northwest and Boreal Canada. He emphasised that the company that employs him, just like most multi-national

corporations, is a "good corporate citizen," and that all of these corporations are obliged to follow laws.

The similarity between people attending the conference was his first observation. He noticed that people identified themselves as members of a clan and that clan and family values were very important to everyone. He stated that he too was a part of a clan system because of his Scottish heritage. He reiterated that he found there to be many similarities between people. He had witnessed the similar vision all of the participants had for "our forests" and the need to protect the forest for traditional, spiritual, economic, and social reasons. There are roadblocks for capacity development in First Nations and access to opportunities. He heard that progress has been made, but that it was being made slowly. There are many new opportunities for Aboriginal peoples, especially in terms of new sawmills, so while the opportunities might not be in the forest itself, many are related to it.

He stated that he had also heard about the potential for non-timber product resources and that these need not be at the expense of traditional forest jobs. He added that giving gifts to the forest for the right to harvest the trees is the right thing to do, and that companies do provide gifts to the forest via planning and reforestation. He had heard that it was difficult to get into the business, and that partnerships can be considered means to help with this difficulty. He finished by suggesting that "we need to learn to laugh with each other. We are all leaving here a little wiser." He thanked everyone for the honour of being a witness.

The third witness addressed the plenary. She thanked those who had chosen her to be a witness and added that she had witnessed many people speaking from the heart and with integrity. She said that she too would try to follow them and speak from the heart. The witness identified three themes. The first was the emphasis on the connectedness of all things. Both the Elders and other participants reminded the delegates of families and the families to come. The second theme she identified was that of difficulty. She spoke of the challenges that First Nations face, and said that it is important to realize that concepts such as certification must be evaluated in the context of these challenges. The third concept she identified was pride. She referred to one of the conference participants who commented, "We are on the long road back to regaining First Nations pride." There seems to be an awakening, but it is important not to discount the frustration that results when people talk more than they act on behalf of First Nations concerns and issues. There was also a focus on innovation in terms of housing, jobs, and the ecosystem. She remarked that everyone had been encouraged to look at and value Traditional Ecological Knowledge in order to develop a new economy based on conservation.

The fourth witness thanked the Elders and Fort William's people for allowing the conference gathering to take place on their territory. Commenting that he was looking for one word to describe the conference, he noted that being involved with First Nations forestry and having been to other conferences, the word would he would use would be "encouraging." First Nations are gaining access to natural resources. The witness also said he observed the absence of youth delegates to the conference and would like to see more youth involved in conferences such as this. "The seventh generation is behind us, and we see very few involved in this process," he said. He concluded by emphasizing the importance to have youth there when the older generation steps down.

Mr. Prest took to the podium after the fourth witness was finished. He asked that the next time the delegates attended a conference like this one, that they bring their sons and daughters or grandchildren. He thanked all of the witnesses one more time, adding, "We are all witnesses here."

Last Words from Conference Participants

The floor was opened for participants to talk about things that happened during the conference and discuss future directions.

Mr. Bombay remarked that there was a need to discuss a lot more with individuals about what is taking place in the forestry sector. Delegates heard about the boreal conservation network, climates change, dreams of different organizations, carbon trade, opportunities in non-timber forest products, and

bioenergy — all things that have led to success stories. However, one of the participants pointed out that there was a long way to go to change policies that recognize the values and issues of Aboriginal peoples. There is a need for the Human Resources Development Council to get involved. He concluded by stating that the conference had been great, but that there is a need to continue talking and sharing dialogue.

A participant remarked on the need to create a dialogue that would keep forestry-related policies and work community-based. Too much of the forest is tenured out to big companies, while First Nations are left scrambling. He asked how it might be possible to avoid this same scenario in terms of non-timber forest products.

The next participant added that there was some talk, but not enough emphasis, on empowerment and respecting the rights of Aboriginal peoples. A recommendation is not the same as recognizing Aboriginal rights, which goes beyond capacity building. He stressed the importance of First Nations communities becoming politically and economically viable. "The issues of Aboriginal and treaty rights are forest rights," he said. Eighty per cent of First Nations communities are in the forest. There needs to resource access and benefit sharing.

A participant noted that much of the discussion over the course of the conference was about Aboriginals as employees. He asked the industry representatives in the room to consider what part of their forest tenure they could return to First Nations. The industry people have the power and the ability to make the most change. He stated that reallocation was an opportunity for those industry representatives to "be ahead of the curve," and represented an opportunity for them to be "true partners."

The next participant to speak (another industry representative) responded by first identifying himself as a "European Aboriginal" and citing the fact "that we all have a lot in common." He acknowledged how ignorance of First Nations traditions by Europeans had affected relations. He stated that he hoped that everyone had the same long-term goal of sharing the forest.

A participant mentioned that he was hoping to share the resources while there were still some left to share.

Identifying himself as a "young person," the next participant remarked that he felt he had rose-coloured glasses on at the last conference he had attended as he had witnessed more hesitancy and volatility in thought this time around.

The following participant remarked that he had heard a lot about collaborations between First Nations and provincial governments, and said that as a member of the Northwest Territories, he was happy not to have to deal with such collaborations. He said that attending the conference had made him aware of all of the problems that occur "south of 60." He suggested that the next conference be held in the NWT so people could get a sense of what is up there and the future of forestry.

One of the participants suggested a need to educate all of the non-Aboriginal foresters about the importance of First Nations values.

Mr. Bombay indicated that it was time to end the conference and noted that all the issues brought forth during the conference are part of an ongoing process. He thanked the delegates and the conference organizers for the chance to play a role and to listen to all that was said. He then asked the Fort William drummers to play before a closing prayer from Elder Ann Wilson.

Creating a New Climate for Aboriginal Forestry

Barry Waito, LP Canada Ltd.

In order to move relations between First Nations and the forestry industry forward, it's important to reflect on both good and bad experiences, according to Barry Waito, Area Forest Manager for Louisiana Pacific Canada. He stressed that learning from the past gives us the tools necessary to look toward the future.

Forestry is the most important commercial sector for First Nations, Waito said. Over 80% of First Nations communities live in forested areas, but while the impact of commercial forestry on First Nations continues to expand, provincial policies have failed to keep pace with the evolution of the industry and court rulings. This has resulted in increased tensions between industry and First Nations.

All forestry partners have valuable lessons to learn from past experiences, he said. Governments have learned the importance of resolving land claims, the need to define consultation, the advantages of creating proactive enabling legislation – rather than allowing court decisions to dictate policy, and the benefits of creating opportunities for industry and First Nations capacity-building.

First Nations have learned the importance of communication between and within bands, the advantages of stability and predictability in band governance, the importance of adhering to projected costs and schedules, and the need for stability and continuity, even when chiefs and councils change.

The forestry industry has learned the importance of spending time in partner communities, allowing time and opportunity for Aboriginal communities to gather data and review plans, and the need to understand First Nations governance structures.

Waito said partnerships are the most profitable and effective way to benefit all parties. Specific areas of interest might include forest management planning, fee-for-service contracting, co-management or co-operative management agreements, joint ventures, and First Nations tenure.

There are advantages and disadvantages to each approach, but the keys to success are always the same, Waito concluded. All parties need to understand and articulate their goals and desires within clearly-defined, well-understood agreements. Joint management or advisory committees must involve First Nations from the earliest stages of planning, and reviews should take place on a regular basis. There should be training, contracting and scholarship opportunities for Aboriginal communities. And most important, all partners need to acknowledge that developing meaningful, profitable, equitable partnerships requires time and patience.

First Nations and Forest Industry Relationships: Some Perspectives from British Columbia

Jake Wilson, The Institute on Governance

Jake Wilson gave an overview of a study on the relationships between Aboriginal communities and the forest industry, based on a series of in-depth, confidential interviews with British Columbia First Nations, forestry companies, the B.C. and federal governments, and Aboriginal and industry associations.

At the present time, more than 38% of forest lands in B.C. are Aboriginal and the amount of total forested acreage is increasing each year. But information on First Nations participation in forestry is scarce.

The study attempted to define some of the contextual factors that shaped the relationships between First Nations and the forest industry. These included:

- legal developments
- international commitments
- national strategic approaches
- market factors—such as the softwood lumber dispute with the United States and natural occurrences like wildfires and beetles
- industry trends
- the evolution of First Nations governance
- treaty and land claim negotiations in British Columbia, and
- provincial policies on such topics as tenure reallocation, revenue-sharing, industry deregulation, results-based forestry management, and government reorganization.

Many of the study's conclusions were positive, Wilson said. Considerable progress has been made in all areas in the past five years, but data collection and tracking could be much improved. Despite a wide divergence of views, there appears to be growing common ground and guarded optimism about the future of First Nations/ forest sector collaboration. In fact, many companies are beginning to leverage Aboriginal relations as a potential competitive advantage.

However, he continued, uncertainty regarding court decisions and their interpretation, ongoing trade disputes, and legislative changes continue to create problems and hamper trust. The study concluded that Aboriginal communities are seeking quality jobs with more focus on management, value-added production and silviculture, as well as the development of long-term capacity. In support of these goals, the study recommends the reinstatement of government funding for forest-related training programs and the development of a long-term strategy to support the development of First Nations capacity.

Aboriginal-industry relations are a long-term venture, Wilson concluded. They require patience, trust and commitment from all parties, and honest communication if the process is to continue slowly moving forward.

Appendix 1: Acronyms

ABC	Aboriginal Business Canada
AHRDCC	Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada
ASI	Aboriginal Strategic Initiative
BEAHR	Building Environmental Aboriginal Human Resources
CCHREI	Canadian Council for Human Resources in the Environment Industry
CESO	Canadian Executive Services Organization
CFSA	Crown Forest Sustainability Act (Ontario)
CMHC	Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation
CMTs	Culturally Modified Trees
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FNFP	First Nations Forestry Program
FPAC	Forest Products Association of Canada
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
IMFN	International Model Forest Network
INAC	Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
LMG	Listuguj Mi'Gmaq Government
LRRCN	Little Red River Cree Nation
NAFA	National Aboriginal Forestry Association
NAFTA	North America Free Trade Agreement
NFTPs	Non-timber forest products
NODA	Northern Ontario Development Agreement
NRCan	Natural Resources Canada
NSC	National Steering Committee
NSTC	North Shore Tribal Council
OMNR	Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
RPF	Registered Professional Forester
SACO	Service d'assistance canadienne aux organismes
SFL	Sustainable Forest Licence
SFM	Sustainable forest management
SFMN	Sustainable Forest Management Network
TEK	Traditional Ecological Knowledge
TLUOS	Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Studies
UNCED	UN Conference on Environment and Development
UNFF	UN Forum on Forests
WGIP	Working Group on Indigenous Populations

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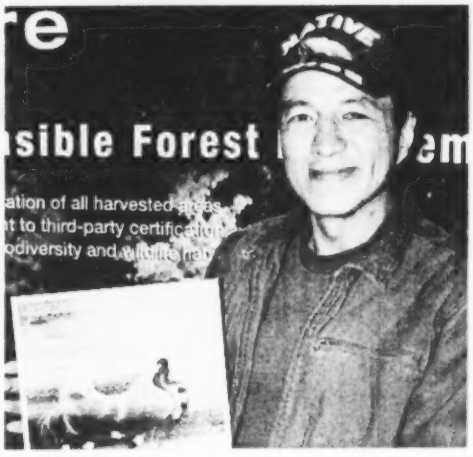

Sinclair Sabourin

University of British Columbia Faculty of Forestry Exhibit / Exposition de la faculté de foresterie de l'Université de la Colombie-Britannique

Pamela Perreault, Bonnie Vermette

Northwest Company historical interpreters / Des interprètes historiques de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest, Jack Smyth

Northwest Company historical interpreters / Des interprètes historiques de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest

Sam Senecal, Elders/Ainés Romeo Basaillion and/et Elsie Basaillion

Jake Wilson

Janet Pronovost, Maria Moore, Ross Barclay, Cliff Anderson

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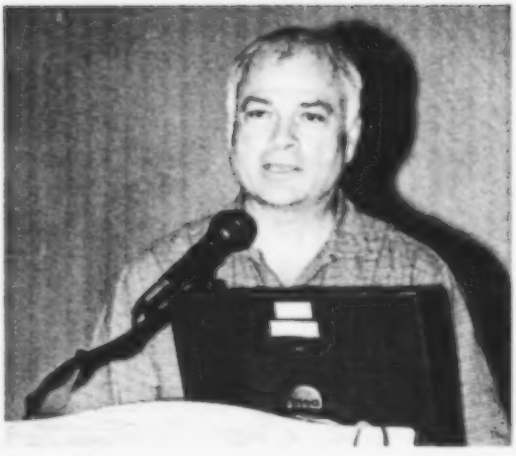

Barry Waito

Gordon Iron, Lorraine Rekmans

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